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EXCUSES

FEATURES

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Special Feature

36

Check out the Best Business Cards of 1998. Bob Popyk tells how to improve our "Billboards along the road to success."

Reality Check

AMATEUR NIGHT 24

New Year's Eve is for people who don't know how to party.
By Mark Johnson

Technology Update

PROJECTING PROFITS 32

Technological advances have made LCD video projectors even more enticing. By Stephan Jacob

Tech Talk

EQ ETIQUETTE 44

Using your equalizer properly can make all the difference in your sound.
By George Mohr

DJ Shopper

CRANK UP THE VOLUME 75

Before you buy another amplifier, read up on who's who and what's what. Don't let your equipment be an expense, make it an investment.
By Henry Collins

JANUARY 1998 ISSUE #43

EQUIPMENT

In Search Of... 46
Scoops:
Rane MM 8x mixer 54
Numark DM1635 mixer 58
APi microphones 60
Severe Sound amplifier 64
Gemini CD-9800 66
Panasonic SL-VM525 70
ADJ XDM-221 mixer 80
KAM GMX-ONE mixer 82
BST Activ-25 mixer 84

MUSIC

P.S.W.C.D.T. 20
Crowd Pleaser 22
Music News 92
DMA Top 50 Chart 120

PERFORMING

Profile: Steppin' Out 28
Profile: Taylor Made 50
Christmas Trivia 104
Nightmares/Historic Affairs 121

MANAGEMENT

Reality check 36
Club View 110

KARAOKE

Sing-along Essentials 108

ETCETERA

Feedback 10
Juice 11
'98 Mobile Beat DJ Show 12
Ad Index 120

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Ladies and Gentlemen, step right up, it's...

The Greatest Show on Earth! OK, I'll admit it. Sometimes our enthusiasm can get a bit carried away but, no doubt about it, this year's unbeatable roster of exhibits, seminars, and entertainment will truly make up an all-star Mobile Beat DJ Show & Conference. This year the show is being held at the Las Vegas Tropicana Hotel on January 20, 21, and 22, 1998.

Highlighting the seminar schedule are two special presentations by Bob Popyk and Doug Cox. Popyk is president of Bentley-Hall Inc., a sales strategy company, and a regular speaker at NAMM (National Association of Music Merchants). He will share strategies that, when applied, will really make a difference in your business. And Doug Cox, former Atlantic Records promotion director, is back by popular demand. Doug's unique brand of humor and insight will enlighten your life as well as your business ethics.

Overall, there'll be a full schedule of DJ-specific seminars with a fresh slate of interesting and unique topics and, of course, the exhibit hall. Check out the booths and speak one-on-one with the people who have an interest in you, the MOBILE DJ. By their support of our show, we feel these vendors realize the MOBILE DJ is an integral part of their business, an industry that Mobile Beat Magazine has worked diligently to elevate over the past six years.

But if you won't be with us in Vegas, check out future issues of the magazine for a full show coverage. And, yes, audio tapes will once again be available of all the seminars.

Having said all that, you've got a copy of the magazine in your hand with a lot more going on inside! See who won the best business cards contest; it starts on page 36. If you like contests, there's a great holiday trivia contest on page 104. Make copies and use it this holiday season to liven up your gigs. You'll also find all the usual numerous equipment Scoops, Music News and much more!

Lastly, we'd like to thank Dan Price of Gallery West Portrait Studios in Las Vegas for the cover shot, featuring husband and wife DJ team Patrick and Jodie Harris from Las Vegas.

Mike Buonaccorso
Trade Show Producer

Mobile BEAT
The DJ Magazine

January 1998 - Issue #43

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Editor-In-Chief • *Robert A. Lindquist*
Publishing Director • *Michael Buonaccorso*
Production Manager • *Reneé Lassial*
Trade Show Manager • *John Rozz*
Technical Editor • *Henry Collins*
Advertising Sales Manager • *Art Bradlee*
Circulation • *Stephanie Scott / Dan Walsh*
Staff Artist • *Jeff Marinelli*
Contributing Editors and Writers
Fred Sebastian • Jay Maxwell
George Mohr • Mark Johnson
Robert Taylor • Forest Neal
Steve Wozniak • David Varga
Bob Popyk • Dave Kreiner
B.J. Morris • Thomas Edison

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MTX PROFESSIONAL AUDIO

Gear Book article draws kudos, complaints and corrections

The article entitled "Buying A Mixer 101," which appeared in our annual Gear Book, received a mixed bag of reviews from our readers and advertisers. Several readers commented that the article's essence, which was how to choose a mixer based on an individual's needs and style, was right on target. Unfortunately, the practical information in the article was overshadowed by the fact that it was written by an employee of Gemini Sound Products, with a bias toward Gemini Products. Our decision to allow certain statements—which amplified this bias—to be printed, brought the following written responses from two other manufacturers:

As someone who has always enjoyed reading *Mobile Beat*, I was dismayed and disappointed by the article "Buying A Mixer 101." The article was not only biased and misleading, it contained outright falsehoods. For example, under the heading "Mix and Crossfade," the author states: "Gemini's new Platinum Series mixers are the only mixers that allow continuous crossfading to and from any input to any other input, by allowing the DJ to temporarily turn off either crossfader assignment switch."

This statement is completely incorrect. You can not crossfade from Phono 1 to Line 1 on *any* mixer; they are both inputs! What the author is trying to say is that only Gemini has a fader with an ON/OFF switch, which is also false. The American DJ XDM-352 has the same function with the ON/OFF switch for the crossfader and I am sure there are other models by other manufacturers with this feature.

Under the heading, "Need More Output?" the author is obviously trying to downplay the importance of balanced outputs. Could this be because Gemini doesn't offer a mixer with balanced outputs? The author also states, "The best mixers carry a full three-year warranty." This statement will surely come as news to every mixer manufacturer, none of which offer such a warranty. The industry standard is a one-year warranty. American DJ offers a two year warranty. Most importantly, the warranties carried by American DJ and other companies are free; they are not contracts that must be purchased by the consumer. So the author is guilty of not comparing "apples to apples."

When American DJ employees are asked to write how-to articles for a publication, we try hard to avoid product plugs, and we provide information that will be helpful to DJs in general. Either the author lacks a good general knowledge of DJ products or he simply decided to ignore the facts and abuse the opportunity to write for *Mobile Beat* as a cheap way to get free advertising. In which case, he should have called his article "Buying a Gemini Mixer 101."

John R. Brown, National Audio Manager
American DJ Supply

eds note: Concerning warranties: It should have been pointed out in the article that the length of a warranty has no direct relationship to the quality of a particular product. In most cases, a one-year warranty will offer sufficient protection, as any problems that are apt to occur will do so in that time period. Therefore, the length of any product's warranty should be considered right along with features, overall quality and price. The final determination being how important the length of a product's warranty is to the buyer.

Regarding the Gear Book 1998, Issue 42, "Buying a Mixer 101," here are some of the errors:

• It is not true that Gemini's mixers are the only mixers to allow crossfading between multiple inputs: Rane's *Mojo Series MM 8x DJ Mixer* allows the same choice, and maybe others do, too.

• The entire section headed "Inboard Power Supply or Wall Wart?" is so misleading as to be totally false, with the exception of the trivially obvious fact that, if you lose your power supply your mixer will not work. OK, and if you lose your records you won't have anything to play either.

The writer fails to mention that there is a category of power supplies that falls between the often troublesome and noisy built-in power supplies and the annoying wall warts: these are outboard power supplies. An outboard power supply compliments the inboard power supply, producing a superior result. For example: Rane uses exclusive inboard power supply voltage doubler circuits to guarantee the same high-voltage, high-current performance as recording studio consoles. Most professional recording consoles use outboard power supplies because that is the best way to get the quietest possible performance. When performance is everything, when perfection is a must, when only the very best will do, the first thing a designer does is remove the noisy power supply hum-field from the studio environment.

Note that there is an important distinction between an outboard power supply and a wall wart: a wall wart is plugged directly into an outlet strip or the wall, and by so doing it covers up the next receptacle—something everyone hates; a true outboard power supply, on the other hand, is always designed to be securely mounted well away from the unit and the outlet strip or wall outlet. So if you want the quietest DJ mixer available, insist on one with an outboard power supply.

Dennis Bohn, VP Research & Development for RANE

eds note: In addition, Numark Industries requested that we clarify a line in the article which read, "Gemini, the original Numark and MTX..." The line refers to three separate companies and was not meant to infer that Numark, at any time or in any form, has been owned by any other company.

We Want Your FEEDBACK!

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A MIXED BAG OF TREATS FOR DJS/KJS

FREE UPGRADES ONLINE

Event Planner™, the "customer-based" event planning program has finished another round of refinements. RadioPro Inc. operations manager Frank Whyte, says the new version of Event Planner™ looks and works just like the previous versions, but handles the data input by customers differently.

"We've come up with some solid methods to ensure that the data the DJs receive back from their clients is valid and useful. That means that the reports are cleaner, so it's a win-win. The upgrade is available over the Internet only. Existing Event Planner™ customers can go to http://members.aol.com/radioprodj/download.htm for instructions and the free files.

Event Planner™ is a computer program that allows DJs to create "mini programs" to assist clients in planning special events. The program allows DJs to customize the program they send to clients, adding their own company name and customizing a built-in music database to suit their own requirements. For more information on Event Planner™, see the product Web site at http://www.kep.net/epfw.

WEST L.A. MUSIC HOSTS DJ EXPO & SPINOFF

Over 300 west coast DJs were on hand for West L.A. Music's recent Second Annual DJ Expo and Spinoff, co-sponsored by Gemini and Lytequest. DJ Spinoff finalists scratched and mixed their way through an evening of dynamic performances competing for $1000's in Gemini DJ gear. First place honors went to winner R.A.W. (Raul Gonzalez) of Long Beach. The event featured celebrity judges including Death Row Records recording artist J. Flexx; Death Row producer Sean "Barney" Thomas; L.A. rapper, DJ and producer DJ Quik; famous DJ from San Francisco DJ Disc; L.A. rapper and DJ, Griff Dogg.

Other DJ equipment manufacturers participating in the three-day extravaganza of seminars, workshops and special events included JBL, Roland, American DJ, Denon, Akai, Martin Professional Lighting, GLI, ETA, Meteor Lights and Az-Iz Cases. West L.A. Music has been in business 30 years, specializing in the sale of pro audio equipment, keyboards, computers, music software, recording equipment, guitars, basses, amplifiers, and drums, as well as DJ gear.

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MINIDISC GAINING MOMENTUM

The company famous for life-like reproduction good enough to shatter glass has entered the minidisc arena. Memorex is now offering recordable 74-minute minidiscs packaged as single units, two-packs and three-packs.

Minidiscs, which continue to grow in popularity with Mobile DJs, offer the convenience of audio cassettes, but with the digital sound quality of compact discs. Recognizing this trend, U.S. electronics retailers have begun dedicating in-store displays to the minidisc format, including minidisc players, recorders, and pre-recorded and blank media.

With Memorex minidiscs, you can make thousands of recordings with the same sound quality as the original source and with freedom to edit and combine tracks. The minidisc format also allows users immediate access to specific recorded tracks; along with the ability to display information they might like to have, such as the composer's name or a specific track title. Suggested retail prices for the Memorex minidisc line are: Single - $6.99, 2-pack - $13.99 and 3-pack - $19.99.

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January 21

see page 18

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Keynote Speaker

Bob Popyk, publisher of the monthly newsletter Creative Selling®, highlights Tuesday, Jan. 20, with the seminar, ***"How To Increase Your DJ Business By 30%... Starting Next Month."*** Mr. Popyk's insightful business tactics are published in several publications, including *Mobile Beat Magazine.*

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January 22

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Schedule of Events

Tuesday, January 20, 1998

Registration opens at 8 a.m.

Seminars: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

SHOWSTARTERS:

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- Part #1 "DJ Show Survival: How to Get the Most Out of a Trade Show."
- Part #2 "Be Worth The Money" How to increase your business value.
- Part #3 Our keynote speaker, Bob Popyk presents..."How to Increase Your DJ Business by 30% - Starting Next Month!"

Learn how to maximize every opportunity to increase your bookings and profitability!

Also on Tuesday...

- "Kids From 2 to 22." Explore all aspects of the youth market, from kid shows, elementary and high school dances, to the college market.
- "IceBreakers." Tips and ideas to get your parties started and keeping them going.
- "Making Money With Trivia." Create nostalgia events, plus high school reunion tips.
- "Problem Solving Forum." A group of experienced professionals roundtable with you to troubleshoot DJ dilemmas.
- "Tech Tips and System Design."
- "Getting Your Price." How to put a value on your own worth.
- "Motorized Soccer." The world debut of a new game.

Tuesday night 8 p.m. - 12 a.m.

Opening Night Party with Super Bowl-bound Nik and the Nice Guys. Nik's act is the ultimate in audience participation! Every DJ will learn tips tonight!

Plus! Special guest Christy Lane with a unique interactive medley of dance styles.

Sponsored by American DJ Supply.

Wednesday, January 21, 1998

Registration opens 9 a.m.

Exhibits open 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Sound and light equipment manufacturers, music dealers, and other DJ-related outlets will showcase their products.

Seminars: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

- "Wedding Performances - the Finishing Touch." Those additional details that make a truly polished show.
- "The DJ: In for the Long Haul." Ever wonder if you'll be a DJ at 60 years old? It's possible. This panel will tell you how.
- "Dance For DJs: From A To Z." Cover all the bases of dance music and dance with Hillbilly Rick, Christy Lane, and Mike Mireles.
- "DJ Computer Technology." Part 1: On the net.
- "DJ Computer Technology." Part 2: On the GIG. (incredible new technology)
- "Multi-Systems - Options And Ideas." Training, keeping, paying your employees; franchising.
- "Legal Warfare: Boot Camp For DJs." Entertainment attorney, Sheldon Starke, tackles legal issues.
- ***Plus!*** Manufacturer Tech Demos!

Wednesday night 9 p.m. -12 a.m.

"The American DJ Awards Show." Free to all show attendees, others $35 cover if space available.

continued on page 18

Performance Products For The Professional DJ

NEW!

DN-T620 Combi-Deck

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- Pitch Control for CD & Cassette Deck
- Programmed Play (CD)

Denon, the world leader in cassette, CD and MiniDisc technology, now offers a complete line of performance DJ products. Developed exclusively for professional use, with input from the industry's best, Denon delivers the reliability and performance that professionals demand.

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SMX-2000 Digi-Scratch Mixer

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- Sampling and Stutter
- Seamless Loop

NEW!

DN-M2000R MD Recorder

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Visit our web site: www.denon.com

Schedule of Events

continued from page 16

Thursday, January 22, 1998

Registration opens 9 a.m.

Exhibits open 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Sound and light equipment manufacturers, music dealers, and other DJ-related outlets will showcase their products.

Seminars 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

- Special Guest, Doug Cox will enlighten you with, "The Ride of a Lifetime."
- "Profit from P.R.: Getting Free advertising!"
- "Working With The Competition." Getting along with other companies in your area; networking or association?
- "Single Operator Forum." Dealing with the issues unique to one-person operations.
- "Small Town Promotions." Unique ideas that can be applied to market your services in smaller urban and rural markets.
- "Karaoke: Alive And Growing."
- "DJ 101: The Follow-up." A continuation of last year's nuts and bolts course with Spinnin' 2000's co-author Dennis Hampson.

Plus: Manufacturer Tech Demos!

Thursday afternoon

CD Swap Meet! Attendees will have designated area to shop and swap! Bring what you don't need and make some quick cash! Music only. No dealers or reps please.

Thursday night 8 p.m.-till?

Closing party at The Beach, Vegas' hottest club. VIP *Mobile Beat* attractions! (Must be 21 or older)

NOTE: Seminars are available on a first-come, first-serve basis. All seminars and some events are subject to change without notice. Please refer to our Web site (http://www.mobilebeat.com/djshow/) for updates of listings and times.

If you think you're the best... here's your chance to PROVE IT!

The Competitions include:
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"PropMaster of 1997" & "The Brown Badge of Courage"

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The American DJ Awards

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- There will be two Jumbo video screens so everyone can see.
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- Valuable DJ-related items for door prizes!
- Show starts at 9 p.m. and ends at midnight.

Anyone wanting to compete for fabulous prizes in the categories of "Male Entertainer of the Year," "Female Entertainer of the Year," "PropMaster of the Year," or tell their version of a true DJ disaster on stage (no stories about deaths please) in the "Brown Badge of Courage" competition, must have their audition videos turned in for review by November 30, 1997.

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BY JAY MAXWELL

Holiday Happenings

The holiday season is upon us: that festive five-week period from Thanksgiving through New Year's Eve, when we can expect our booking calendars to be filled almost every day with various events. As you know (I hope), the true meaning of Christmas is the celebration of the greatest gift ever known to man, the birth of Jesus Christ. However, many of the parties you will book will be billed as a holiday party. So, to be politically correct, we recommend that you ask your client how they will be referring to the event. Will it be a Christmas party or holiday party?

LET IT SNOW

For some people, it's not Christmas without snow. I grew up in South Georgia, and so I only dreamed of a white Christmas. Many people's vision of Christmas is one that will include a tree or a cozy fire in the fireplace. Decorations, lights, family visits, presents wrapped in pretty paper, and a reindeer named Rudolph are other holiday staples. As for the music played at these events, however, there won't be that much difference regardless on how you celebrate the holidays. Music is one element to the season of celebration that is fairly universal and serves to unite people. Christmas music, however, usually does not lend itself to getting people on the dancefloor. Instead, most of the music is great for singing and listening to while opening presents or enjoying a feast.

PARTY TIME

At a party, holiday music can be mixed in at various times to set the mood. If it's a Christmas party you're doing, you'll never have a shortage of music to play. There are almost as many different types of Christmas songs as there are styles of music. Each category: Christian, rock and roll, vocalists, country,

FAST SONG TITLE	ARTIST
Jingle Bell Rock	Bobby Helms
Rockin' Around The Christmas Tree	Brenda Lee
Little Saint Nick	Beach Boys
Rock And Roll Christmas	George Thorogood
Santa Claus Is Coming To Town	Bruce Springsteen
I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus	John Mellencamp
Run Rudolph Run	Chuck Berry
Christmas Medley	Salsoul Orchestra
Macarena Christmas	Los Del Rio (Joy Mix)
Santa Claus Is Comin' (In a Boogie Woogie Choo Choo Train)	Tractors

SLOW SONG TITLE	ARTIST
The Christmas Song	Nat "King" Cole
Please Come Home For Christmas	Aaron Neville
White Christmas	Bing Crosby
Christmas in Dixie	Alabama
Blue Christmas	Elvis Presley
I'll Be Home For Christmas	Peabo Bryson
Pretty Paper	Roy Orbison
Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas	Amy Grant
Winter Wonderland	Harry Conick Jr.
Silent Night	Boyz II Men
Merry Christmas Darling	Carpenters
Merry Christmas Baby	Bonnie Raitt & Charles Brown
Celebrate Me Home	Kenny Loggins
Christmas Lullaby	Mannheim Steamroller
O' Little Town Of Bethlehem	Mannheim Steamroller

All songs listed are available on *Mobile Beat's Seasonings* CD collection. For information, call 716-385-9920.

R&B, classical, and jazz (just to name a few) cover the standard songs like *White Christmas* and *Silent Night*. The genre also spans the serious (*Please Come Home for Christmas* and *Away In A Manger*), to the silly (*Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer* and *The Chipmunk Song*). Kids of all ages like *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer* and *Frosty The Snowman*, while *God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen* and *We Three Kings* are truly appreciated only by an adult audience.

If you're looking to compile a large selection of holiday music at a reasonable price, *Mobile Beat's* new *Seasonings* CD collection is a treasury of holiday hits. Other suggestions include a couple of "Best of Christmas" CDs: both of *The Billboard Greatest Christmas Hits from 1935-1954* and *from 1955-present*, Kenny G's *Miracles Holiday Album*, and at least one CD from Mannheim Steamroller.

A typical company party usually begins with a social hour when the majority of the music should be holiday songs as guests arrive and mingle. During dinner, the music should be at a low, pleasant volume, with a mix of two holiday tunes to every one contemporary song. If you have a lighting show, the lights should either be turned off or be set on low lighting. Definitely, no lights should be spinning, strobing or flashing during dinner; unless you like seeing people turn green and running for the bathroom!

Door prizes are often given throughout the evening. You will probably be called on to assist in some way—perhaps pulling names or numbers from a hat. You may also be asked to loan your microphone to the MC, or even become the MC.

Most companies that give an annual holiday party have learned that one way to keep everyone at the party all evening is to stretch out the gift giving. Just before you switch from holiday music to dance music, the boss usually gives a speech, often handing out awards and/or year-end bonuses. Finally, the dance phase begins. The accompanying list of songs are great to blend in during the night to keep the seasonal flavor. These are the holiday songs that have proven themselves worthy to be played when someone tells you, "Play Something We Can Dance To!"

Jay Maxwell owns and operates Jay Maxwell's Music By Request in Charleston, South Carolina.

The Ultimate Music Guide for Mobile DJs!

Play Something We Can Dance To

Dance Music Guide Book!

Since 1982, *Mobile Beat's* Musicologist Jay Maxwell has tracked audience response to thousands of songs. This book lists over 1,500 of the most requested songs of all-time. Each listing includes the title, artist, year released and the BPM (where applicable). Plus, for your convenience, the entire list is sorted five ways: alphabetically by title and artist, category, BPM count and year!

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Slow Songs 1980-89
Slow Songs 1990-96
Slow Country
Sock Hop 1955-1969
Special/Novelty Songs
Vocalists
Wedding/Love Songs

Includes Year and BPM!

BY MIKE MIRELES

Boi Bumba

Just when you thought it was safe to go back on the dancefloor.

First it was the Lambada. Then the Macarena took the country by storm. Then the Tongoneo had a short run. Now Brazil strikes back with the Boi Bumba, danced to the song "Tic-Tic-Tac." The dance and song have recently reached American shores and you will be hearing it and seeing it very soon (if you haven't already).

The music of Boi Bumba originated more than 15 years ago in a remote section of the Amazon. Actually, let me quote from the liner notes: "She was beautiful and he worshipped her. African Indian and Portuguese blood mingled in their veins. He was only a poor cowherd but she was expecting a child and this condition brought about an irrepressible craving to eat the tongue of the best 'Boi' (steer) of the herd. Beauty had her treat, the steer did not die of it and the cowherd was not punished; perhaps because once in a while, this world might value mixed blood farm hands and their lust for life more than a fat bullock. Their jubilation is glorified by the 'Bumbas' (drums) during the Boi Festival which commemorates this story."

The song "Tic-Tic-Tac" can be found in its original form on the album "Boi Bumba" by Carrapicho, which is available on BMG U.S. Latin. Carrapicho has recorded eight albums of Boi Bumba music. BMG France discovered the group and "Tic-Tic-Tac" became a number one hit in Europe last summer and in South America at the end of 1996.

TOP 10 SALSA ALBUMS

1.	Los Adolentes	Personal Ideal
2.	Hector Inotcable	Es El Amor Quin Llega
3.	Victor Manuel	Dile A Ella
4.	El Gran Combo	Co Eso
5.	Ricardo Lemvo	Tata Masamba
6.	Jose Albierto	Como Quieras
7.	Grupo Caneo	Aunque Me Duela El Alma
8.	Son 14	A Cualquiera Se Le Muere Un Tio
9.	Lefty Perez	Me Da Locura
10.	Brenda Ki Starr	Peligroso Amor

TOP 10 TEJANO SINGLES

1.	La Mafia	Enomorada
2.	Inotcable	Vivar Sin Ellas
3.	La Differencia	Diablito
4.	Gary Hobbs	Donde Hay Fe
5.	Stefani	Proque Soy Mujer
6.	Elida Y Avante	Tu Llegastel
7.	Emilio	Permiteme
8.	Michael Salgado	La Media Vuelta
9.	Tropa F	Sin Aviso
10.	Hometown Boys	Eres Mia Esta Noche

This list can also be seen on http://www.flash.net/~steppin.

Courtesy of The Jalapeno Beat: Houston's Hottest Latin DJ music source news, Published by Mike Mireles. For a Profile of Mireles, see page 28.

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REALITY CHECK

Amateur Night

BY MARK JOHNSON

New Year's Eve is for people who don't know how to party.

New Year's parties are possibly the year's best opportunity to double or perhaps even triple your usual take from one evening's work. It's an intensely focused night, with demand sometimes exceeding supply, justifying your premium price. And you're not alone. Many banquet facilities double their rates to accommodate the demands of the hosts and the rowdiness of the guests. Despite the fact that we are in a "party profession," I sense there are more than a few Mobile DJs who feel the same as I when it comes to New Year's parties. It's just not worth it.

I'm all in favor of anything that increases bookings but, on the flip side, it's important to look at the big picture and examine some of the things you have experienced, or may experience in the future, on New Year's Eve.

IT'S A JUNGLE OUT THERE

I've spoken with several banquet managers and MDJs and the consensus is: A New Year's Eve party is not just a party you play; it's an event you survive. Seldom will you come home on the first morning of the new year with that same winning feeling you get from performing a great wedding or school dance. You may actually experience a higher level of anxiety before the party and spend most of the evening anticipating its conclusion.

Why is this? Plain and to the point, New Year's Eve parties are a lot of work. Unlike the typical gig that fills a predetermined four-six hour slice of time and end (typically) by midnight, these parties start as late as 10 p.m. and may continue until the last die-hard staggers out the door at the wee hour of 3 a.m.

TWO PARTIES, TWO AUDIENCES

Between the start of your first song and when you finally pull the plug at the end of the show, you'll play what seems to be two different parties for two different sets of people.

Before the bewitching hour, it's a more sedate adult party, with cocktail and dinner music, followed by a mix of slow and hi-energy dance music. All the while, everyone's making regular visits to the bar.

As midnight approaches, things begin to change… dramatically. Obviously, midnight is what New Year's parties are all about. As the moment arrives, couples kiss, make resolutions and begin popping corks for champagne toasts. Your interaction with the crowd also increases with the traditional countdown and special dedications.

OUT OF CONTROL

If the party is scheduled to finish at 2 a.m., you'll be on your feet for seven hours or more. As the night progresses, the guests get more lubricated and more obnoxious. Whether it's open or cash bar, it doesn't matter. Guests will drink, and at least one will go obviously and embarrassingly overboard.

You try to be nice, but the fact is you don't want this person holding a sloshing beer near your equipment. To make matters worse, he (or she) will most likely declare himself the spokesperson for the entire party. He doesn't make requests, he makes demands! Your plans to pace the night and play for the crowd aren't important to this individual. One moment he treats you like you're his all-time best buddy, the next moment he's barking in your face for playing the wrong music. While he may be one of the nicest people you have ever met, alcohol is well-known for its ability to bring out the worst qualities in people as well as making them highly unpredictable.

So now, in addition to trying to entertain the other 100 guests, you have this one person causing major distractions. You can have your client remove the person but, they usually come right

back. And what if the drunk is the client? If you think you can enlist the help of his or her spouse, go for it. Otherwise, you've got a tiger by the tail. We all hope our clients can maintain their composure while hosting a party, but that's not always the case. We've all dealt with drunk patrons. My advice is to just maintain a professional attitude, try to keep the peace and hope your equipment sees a new year.

O.T.

In addition to handling drunken guests, you may have the problem of overtime. This should be outlined in your contract, but it may be forgotten by the end of a New Year's Eve party as your new best friend tries to persuade you into another hour of torture. If it's the host, you could simply show your copy of the contract and what the overtime would cost. If it's a guest, then defer the decision to the host.

Overtime is also contingent upon the banquet facility. If they have bartenders and waitresses, their cost may prohibit overtime for you. If it's at a VFW, firehouse or other rental hall, then it's like being at the client's house—no one is throwing them out.

If overtime is a possibility, the client may try to renegotiate the overtime fee with you. He may remind you of the food you ate and what you drank, as if you were a real guest. If you stand firm, he may go from guest to guest begging for donations so you will play more. He is on the spot, as you may be the last person standing in the way of him and his guests continuing their party. If many people are drunk or near drunk, they may actually boo you for dampening their party spirits. Alcohol really does bring out the ugly in some people.

THE PARTY'S OVER

When the party is finally over, you still have a few things to contend with. As you drag your sorry butt into your vehicle for the ride home, you need to be extra cautious. Even though you (advisably) had an alcohol free night, many other drivers drank heavily and could be dangerous. Add police roadblocks along your journey home and it makes for one long night. Getting to bed around 3:30 a.m. or later will also result in using the following day just to recuperate; causing you to sleep through all the parades and football games. Is this really how you want to welcome the new year?

If you're a younger Mobile DJ, the thought of doubling or tripling your income for one night may be appealing—go for it! But after a while, the hassles outweigh the rewards. I haven't done a New Year's party in at least four years. Instead, I throw the party at my house. Nothing fancy, just a friendly get together with a few other DJs who, like me, would rather stay home on amateur night.

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- Beat Synchronized Effects
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PROFILE

BY FOREST NEAL

Steppin' Out

Houston's Multi-talented Michael Mireles is Actor, DJ and Dance Instructor

The director dismissed the extras just finishing the cocktail lounge scene and then instructed a group of young actors posing as waiters and busboys to take their places on the set. As I headed for the door of the Magnolia Restaurant in Houston, Texas, a herd of anxious young actors whizzed by to take their positions in front of the cameras. I couldn't help but notice one particular face in the crowd. His broad, friendly grin radiated with enthusiasm. It was the fall of 1986 and my first, albeit fleeting, encounter with Michael Mireles.

In 1996, I returned to Houston not as an actor, but as a free-lance writer for a Florida newspaper. I was looking for material on young Hispanic talent and turned to *The Houston Production Guide*. Once again, there was Mike Mireles with that billion dollar smile all over the pages offering his newest creation, "Steppin' Out Entertainment," a high energy Mobile Disc Jockey company.

Michael Anthony Mireles was born in Los Angeles on June 6, 1963. His father worked in a foundry, his mother as a seamstress. He began performing before he was seven years old with a touring Mexican Ballet Folklorico dance group. By the time he was 15 years old he was touring with The Texas Jazz Dancers, Aluzions Dance Troupe and The Glen Hunsucker Dance Company. Ambitious to succeed as an entertainer, Mireles joined the world renown Barbara King Dance Company with whom he competed in professional ballroom dancing. In addition, he was doing extensive film work for the big screen as well as television productions as both an actor and dancer. He's appeared on all three major networks and played a Mexican bandit in "Pancho Barnes" on The History Channel. Off-screen, Mireles continued to bring his incredible talent to thousands of live audiences all over the country, including the Six Flag Astroworld production of "Police Academy Stunt Show." But it was music that most defined this young talent, and the culmination of all this experience resulted in his company, Steppin' Out Entertainment.

When I met up with Mireles at his office, located in a small building behind his family home in Houston, I was curious as to how he got started as a DJ. He began by showing me an enormous shelf area that held hundreds of CDs:

Mireles: "This is the music library, where we keep every type of music that any age or ethnic gathering could request. Everything from Wayne King to the latest musical groups, to the swing sound of the forties is included."

Neal: You must have a great filing system to keep all these discs straight.

Mireles: "We do, and it takes a lot of work. It's one of the jobs that keeps me busy on weekdays."

Neal: You also seem to be in contact with the world: telephones, computer, printer, fax machine, mobile phone. Are you on the Web, too?

Mireles: "Yes, we have our own Web page (www.flash.net/~steppin/). It's the communication age and our business is to communicate in every possible way with the world out there. That includes the ultimate goal of all this effort: to bring music to thousands on a weekly basis."

Neal: How do people hear about you?

Mireles: "Well, our market research tells us that over 80 percent of our clients come to us through referral, and we build on those contacts."

Neal: That means that somewhere along the line, you had to work for that first 20 percent, tell me how it all started.

Mireles: "At first, I was a mobile roadie and DJ. I set up equipment for others, and did shows in hotels, clubs and country bars. This is how I paid my dues, night after night for 10 years, but it's the best way to learn."

Neal: Do you truly enjoy the evening along with the party guests?

Mireles: "Absolutely, because it's genuine passion. That's the secret. You can't play music that you don't feel. You can't be with that many people month in and month out, unless you feel the music, love the sounds, live the beat. It's got to come from your most inner self."

Neal: Do you remember your first event out on your own?

Mireles: "Very clearly. It was July of 1983, upstairs over a restaurant. The building had bad acoustics and we had no shock pads. As the people danced, the needle would jump on the records. It was quite embarrassing, but there was no way to stop it. It was a 50th anniversary party and I was working for a company called Fantasy Unlimited. They supplied me with used records, a Numark mixer, a pair of Technics 1200 turntables and Peavey Black Widow speakers. That's a night I will never forget!"

Neal: How has equipment today changed since 1983?

Mireles: "It's lighter now, and more compact. Just think, 10 years ago we were hauling around album crates, big

"...you can't play music that you don't feel. You can't be with that many people month in and month out, unless you feel the music, love the sounds, live the beat. It's got to come from your most inner self," says Mike Mireles.

mobile consoles and large vinyl records. Today you can fit it all in a Subaru and go."

Neal: Was Fantasy Unlimited an agency?

Mireles: "No, not an agency. They were a Mobile DJ company like Steppin' Out. I was hired to work whenever my high school schedule would permit. As I recall, they had about six DJs working for them. I was with them for three years, then moved out on my own, working at a Holiday Inn lounge."

Neal: Do you follow the trade magazines for music, talent and equipment?

Mireles: "Yes, I keep a file of various music and equipment catalogs, subscribe to *Mobile Beat* as well as Latin trade magazines such as *Tejano News*."

Neal: What are your plans for the future?

Mireles : "My priority right now is audience satisfaction and providing the best music."

Neal: Is your family supportive?

Mireles: "It took a while for them to see the potential. But now my mom gets my stage and performance costumes ready and Dad helps me load the truck, and assists with needed van maintenance. They have become supportive believers. My brother, David, has been working with me for seven years. I trained him on the basics and he has become a valuable asset. I am very proud of him."

Neal: When is your busiest season?

Mireles: "Christmas and prom season. Sometimes we have three or more shows a day during that period."

Neal: Mostly weekend dates?

Mireles: "Not necessarily. We often have luncheon and awards parties on weekdays as well."

Neal: This has become a big business; are you surprised at its success?

Mireles: "Well, nationally it's a multi-billion dollar business, but as for my own company, my expectations for the future were always high."

Neal: Do you feel an enormous responsibility to those people who are expecting you to deliver a fresh new show each performance?

Mireles: "I certainly do. Each party must be tailored to the event and to the client's needs; I mean all aspects of that event, musical selection, room size, sound, and entertainment program."

Neal: Any plans for expansion?

Mireles: "Yes, I'm in a position to expand now, but I want to move slowly as I'm more interested in quality than quantity."

Neal: Any opportunities for others in Steppin' Out Entertainment someday?

Mireles: "Yes, but they must be at a performance level where they are open to learning. They must be patient, unique and, most of all, love music".

Neal: Are you pleased with your performances?

Mireles: "Considering the competition, yes."

MIKE MIRELES' ACTING CREDITS

Mike's acting experience includes too many parts to list them all but some of them include playing a chief detective in the film "Selena," a businessman in the movie "The Man Who Loved Women," and various parts in "Crimestoppers." He's been in several commercials, including: Miller's Lite Beer, Century 21, Chevy Trucks, and Dairy Queen. He has also been seen in numerous music videos and training films.

Neal: How do you stay ahead of the pack?

Michael: "I don't think about staying ahead; I just want to deliver an outstanding show. The rest will come in time."

Neal: How would you sum up Michael Mireles?

Mireles: "Music is his passion. Keep in mind how much new music there is now, and all the various line dances that go with it."

Neal: What words of advice do you have for DJs just starting out?

Mireles: "There is great potential in DJ entertainment. In fact, it's phenomenal, and there are more parties and events than there are professionals to do them. There is room for entrepreneurs as long as they are unique and professional. It doesn't require an enormous initial investment, and newer technology has made it easier.

"If there is a down side, it would be that you must sacrifice your weekends and adopt a different life style, and occasionally nightclub work can bring a few objectionable people around. But remember that the clients expect the best. They expect personality and uniqueness and incredible programming. You can have an earthquake sound system, and the newest state-of-the-art light show, but they still expect a unique performance."

With that, I concluded the interview. As I walked away from the office, I paused for a moment to look back. Through the window, I could see Mireles back at work, concentrating on pulling CDs and previewing the program for that evening's event. Steppin' Out Entertainment is more than just music; it is the energy and passion of Michael Mireles. It's the difference between a social gathering and a magical event.

Forest Neal lives in St. Petersburg, Florida and works as a free-lance writer for the Hernando section of The Tampa Tribune. He writes a weekly movie review column, titled "Forest Neal's Hollywood."

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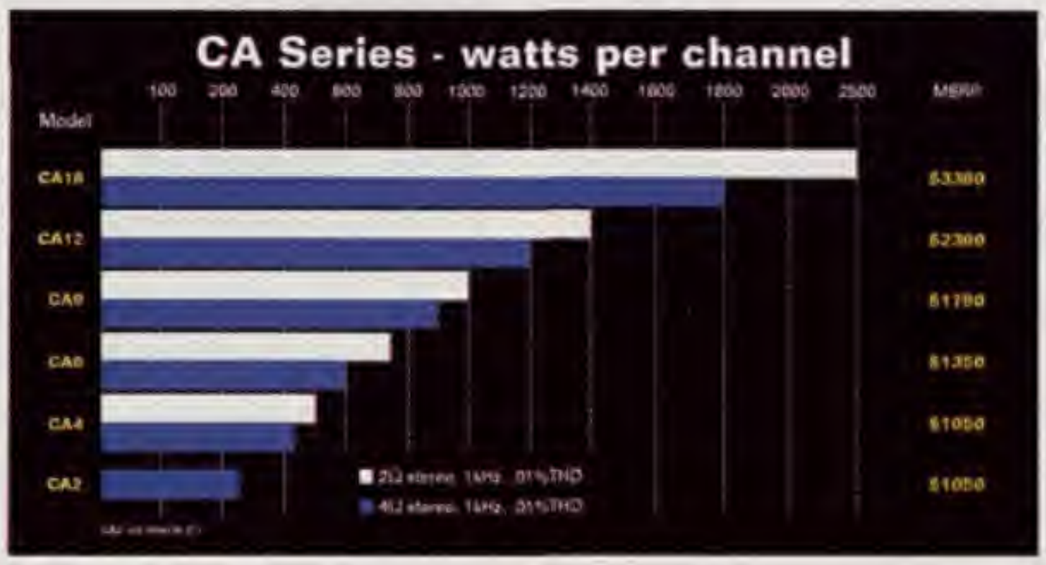

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Projecting the Profits

BY STEPHAN "ISLAND JAKE" JACOB

Technological advances have made LCD video projectors even more enticing for DJs looking to offer more than smoke and mirrors.

Since I last reviewed liquid crystal display (LCD) video projectors in the October '94 issue of Mobile Beat ("Paging Ms. Elsee Deez"), there have been a few changes. Previously, I discussed the advantages of offering such a service and of using an LCD projector verses a standard video monitor; none of which have changed. The advantages include greater involvement with your audience, flexible sizing of the image, ease of transportation and setup, not to mention being able to offer more than just smoke and mirrors. This all still holds true today. What has changed, as usual, is technology.

The marketing opportunities for LCD video run the gamut. You'll be the hit of any school dance if you can provide music videos. Corporate functions can use your services for dual purposes—both entertainment and presentation—making you very valuable. At wedding receptions you can replay the video tape of the wedding. Karaoke applications will really come alive with the use of video. The opportunities are endless! Technology is also endless.

DESIGN INNOVATIONS

1998's crop of projectors are twice as bright, more colorful, cooler running and about a third less hefty. They also have higher resolution capabilities when used in conjunction with computers. The reason for this renaissance can be directly linked to more efficient lamps. Prior years' projectors consumed 250-350 watts and produced about 150-300 lumens. This year's products draw 100-250 watts and output 300-500 or more lumens. Philips' UHP (Ultra High-Performance) lamp design generates more than 5 lumens per watt of input power, about nine times more efficient than before. Higher output lamp designs also assists in achieving higher contrast ratios. Typically I've measured about 40-60:1, but I am now achieving a ratio of 80-100:1.

The energy efficiency displayed by the newer lamp design also has the benefit of producing less heat, therefore requiring smaller and quieter fans for cooling. Smaller and more efficient designs speak directly to the heart of any Mobile DJ. Weight has decreased about 3-5 pounds.

For your multimedia applications, resolutions have increased from standard VGA (640 pixels by 480 pixels) to SVGA (800 pixels by 600 pixels). Some units scale to achieve XGA input (1,024 pixels by 768 pixels), but with some tradeoffs in light, image size and quality. In addition, video projection quality has been increased by using line doublers to about 500 lines of resolution.

LCD manufacturers have an economic edge in keeping costs low while maintaining a consistent investment because LCD technology is used in so many products today, from watches and calculators to computer/video monitors. Cost for the most part has stabilized. Because of this, you can enjoy most of the new and improved features at the same price as before.

CUSTOM FIT

With the consistent flow of cash into the R&D sector, manufacturers have divided the market into four emerging and distinct-sized units. Some of these units are just beginning to show up on the market, but over the next three years expect to see the following:

Palm-size Projectors: Units that weigh 5 pounds or less, output 200-300 lumens of brightness and have standard multimedia resolution of XGA.

Note-size Projectors: Units weighing in at about 10 pounds, outputting 500 or more lumens of brightness, resolution

increasing to SXGA.

Desk-size Projectors: Units weighing about 25 pounds, outputting 1,200 or more lumens and multisync capability rivaling today's CRT projectors. You'll be able to choose from various aspect ratios like 4:3/16:9, plus enjoy resolutions at the UXGA level or even QXGA.

Supersize Projectors: Units weighing 50 pounds or more, outputting 10-20,000 lumens, with multisync compatibility and QXGA resolution. These units will compete directly against CRT projectors for large venue, non-portable, high resolution applications. This also could be the sign of the apocalypse for theater projectors.

SIMPLE AS DLP

Digital Light Processing (DLP) nearly shocked the world a few years ago. Designed by Texas Instruments, this chip-based technology is significantly different than LCD technology. LCD allows light to pass through colored liquid crystals. DLP technology, on the other hand, is a reflective design. Tiny mirrors or highly reflective aluminum are embedded and used to reflect light through a coloration system.

The very nature of DLP design, however, prevents it from becoming a prime solution. DLP reflects light inherently, resulting in a loss of light. Even though the efficiency rating is upwards of 90 percent, higher transmission properties of LCD are currently more efficient and brighter.

DLP, like LCD, can be produced in existing semiconductor factories along with standard computer chip production, so costs should be competitive when the technology itself becomes more viable.

THE FUTURE LOOKS BRIGHT

Speaking of potential, DLP already has three new competitors all based in reflective technology. Pioneer and Raychem are in the process of designing hybrids that combine reflective chips with LCDs. No moniker for the Pioneer unit yet but the Raychem unit, dubbed PDLC (Plasma Dispersed Liquid Crystal), has already been prototyped and looks pretty good. Silicon Light Machines has developed what they call Grating Light Valve (GLV) technology. They are trying to sell their design to manufacturers already producing LCD or DLP projectors. Essentially, their process utilizes a minute voltage that controls a grating to turn on and off certain colored chips; much like a shutter opening and closing in a camera.

That's the latest on video projectors. If you have any questions or you want to purchase any of the units mentioned in the accompanying list, just call me, Stephan Jacob, at: 716-385-6958.

Projector Manufacturers

MFG	PHONE	WEB
Ampro	800-254-3001	www.amprocorp.com
Apollo	800-777-3750	www.apollo.ph.net
Ask	800-275-5231	www.ask.no
Barco	770-218-3200	www.barco-usa.com
Boxlight	800-762-5757	www.boxlight.com
Buhl	800-526-7473	www.buhl-ind.com
Chisholm	800-888-4210	www.chisholm.com
CTX	888-289-6786	www.ctxopto.com
Davis	800-294-3170	www.davisna.com
Digital Proj.	770-420-1350	—
Dukane	800-676-2485	www.industry.net/dukane.av
Eiki	800-242-3454	www.eiki.ca
3M	800-952-4059	www.mmm.com
Epson	800-442-1977	www.epson.com
In Focus	800-294-6400	www.infocus.com
JVC	—	www.jvc.ca/jvc
Lightware	800-445-9396	www.lightware.com
Marantz	630-307-3100	www.marantzamerica.com
Megapower	800-634-2321	—
Mitsubishi	800-843-2515	www.mitsubishi.com
n'View	—	www.nview.com
NEC	800-632-4636	www.nec.com
Panasonic	800-528-8601	—
Philips	800-504-9978	www.philipslcd.com
Plus	800-289-7587	—
Polaroid	800-432-5355	www.polaroid.com
Prolux	800-3PROLUX	www.prolux.com
Proxima	800-447-7692	www.prxm.com
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Another unique feature of the Gig Rig is the lockable cover for all the rackable space. By running a padlock and chain through the molded handle, you can lock the entire unit to a location, then lock the cover with all the gear behind it.

Suggested retail price is $499. For more information please contact SKB Cases at 13501 S.W. 128th St., Ste. 204, Miami, FL. 33186, Tel: (305) 378-1818, Fax: (305) 378-6669, Web site: www.skbcases.com

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Billboards along the road to success

Are your business cards creating more business for you?

BY BOB POPYK

How do you use your business cards? How are you putting to use those little billboards you carry in your pocket or purse? Do they sit idly in your desk drawer or are they at hand as soon as a prospect says, "How do I contact you?" In other words, are they bringing you more business or are they simply a substitute for toothpicks?

BIZ CARD BASICS

It goes without saying that for business cards to have any value at all, they need to display up-to-date information. Are yours current? Is the information on how to reach you correct? Do your cards contain your name as the contact person, and a phone number complete with area code? In judging the cards sent in for this contest, we received several very good cards that did not contain the name of acontact person. Points were lost. And while we did not award points for a fax number, cellular phone, pager number or e-mail address, the easier you are to reach, the better the chances you'll get the job. If you have a Web site, be sure to include your URL.

Speaking of the Internet, an e-mail address on your business card shows

Bob Popyk is the publisher of "Creative Selling©," a monthly newsletter on sales and marketing strategies. His sales meetings and seminars are presented nationwide to major companies and industries. Call 800-724-9700 to reach him or to request a free sample issue of his newsletter.

that you're up with the times. Listing fax and cell phone (or pager) numbers show that you're very accessible. The condition of your cards is important, too. Cards that aren't stained or dog-eared show that you are concerned with quality and appearance.

THAT'S JUST THE BEGINNING

How you put your cards to use is just as important as the look of the cards themselves. Some DJs take their cards beyond the basics, to a higher level. We received several "tent style" cards. These are twice the size of the typical 2-inch by 3.5-inch, but fold down to the standard size. They offer the advantage of four sides on which to put your message. You can use the front and back for your logo and contact information, and then put your pitch inside. You might also consider perforating on the fold, so that the one side becomes a discount coupon.

But you don't need a lot of space if you use what you have effectively. How about the back of your business cards? Several of the cards we received use the reverse side to describe the services they offer. Others use the back to plug their Web pages and e-mail addresses. Some chose not to use that space at all.

KEEP IT CLEAN

With phone numbers and all the other information you might want to list on your business card, don't make the mistake of cramming it all onto one side. That's why the fold-over card with three to four sides of usable space is a good option. Too much text just clutters up the card. If you use type below six points, it becomes hard for some people to read. You need to balance your message with the design of the card. Before you put your company slogan, the number of years you've been in business, phone, fax, and cellular numbers, and a list of all the different kinds of events you handle on one side of your business card, think about your company image, the possibility of confusing and losing the customer, and whether your business card will stand out from your competitors'.

CUSTOM CARDS

Something that most businesspeople forget is that they can have different cards for different uses. For example, maybe you want a card with a coupon for bridal shows and other outside events. You may have another card to give to interested prospects you meet while on a gig.

This does not mean you have to spend thousands of dollars on business cards. Some of the most creative alternatives to business cards require little or no money. One DJ in New Jersey called to explain why he couldn't enter the contest: He doesn't use business cards. Instead, when approached by a prospect who asks for a card, he pulls out his checkbook and rips a check in half so just the business name, address and phone number is on it. He writes his name on the bottom and says, "Here. Call me." It really gets the customers' attention.

Another DJ in Wisconsin says that he doesn't like to use business cards that are the same shape and size as all of his competitors', so when a customer asks for his card, he takes out an index card and writes his name, address, and phone number on it. He says it really stands out from the little stack of regular cards the customer has been accumulating from other DJs. It's certainly a lot bigger, doesn't get lost, and has a personal touch. And when he writes, "I want to earn your business!" in long-hand, it really means something.

Several of the cards sent in were shaped like a miniature record or CD, with a logo centered like a label, another creative way of making the card stand out, while visually enforcing what you do. Regardless of the size or shape of your card, what is most important is the card's ability to communicate what you do. That was the top criteria in the contest. If a prospect really has to read a card closely to understand what you do, or get out a magnifying glass to read your name or phone number, chances are the card isn't going to get the job done. Stay away from phrases like "Professional DJ Service." If, for some reason, you are not perceived to be professional, putting it on your card won't help.

Business cards can bring business in, they can bring customers back, and they can be one of the best methods of personal advertising you have. Take a look at some of the business cards you have collected yourself. If your business card doesn't match their uniqueness and go beyond their creativity, now's the time to do something about it.

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WHAT MAKES A GREAT BUSINESS CARD?

Here's the criteria we used in selecting this year's winning business cards:

Basic information: We were looking for cards that clearly communicates nature of the business and includes the name of personal contact along with the phone number (including area code).

Cards meeting the basic information criteria were then judged on uniqueness of design and overall professional quality. This covered not only the completeness of the information on the card, but legibility and comprehensibility of the information.

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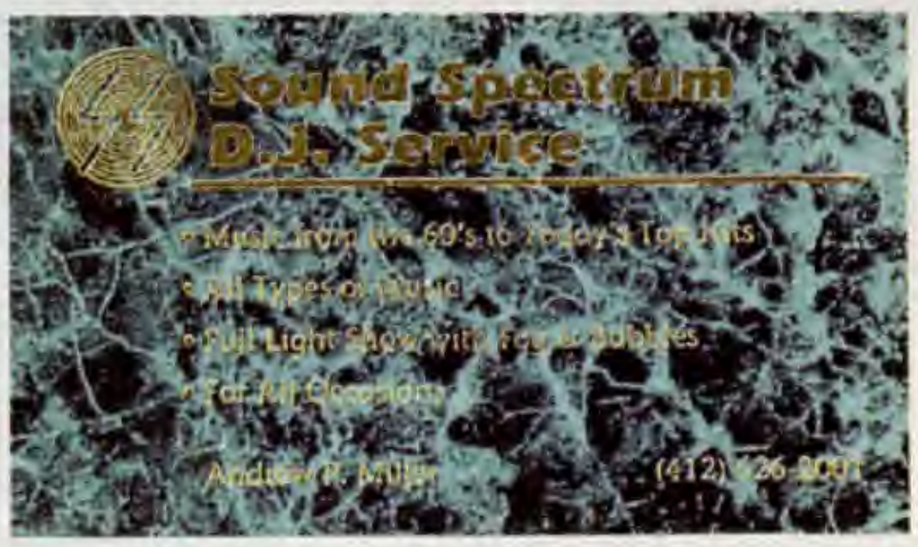

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BY GEORGE MOHR

EQ Etiquette

Problems with your sound may be due to misuse of an equalizer.

With another holiday season upon us, it's time again to think about how to spend all that cash you took in. My advice? Two words: more equipment! It never hurts to improve the sound of your system; and who would turn their nose up at a tax deduction?

WHAT TO BUY?

Let's assume you already have a limiter and an electronic crossover, yet your sound still isn't quite what you want it to be. And it isn't consistent. In some venues it's perfect. Other times it's either a bit shrill, or there's feedback. Sometimes the bass bin resonates like a brass drum, or the tape deck sounds like someone is frying eggs in the tweeter. And no matter what you do with those old songs from the '50s, they always sound hollow and thin.

If this is the case, it's time to look at that other piece of signal processing gear we sometimes take for granted: the equalizer.

THE BASICS

As you know (I hope), the sound that comes out of your speakers is made up of a wide range of frequencies. In simplest terms, equalizers (EQ) break the sound into smaller bands of frequencies. The most common and least sophisticated form of an equalizer are the bass and treble controls on your home stereo or boombox. The bass control boosts or cuts the low end of the sound spectrum while the treble effects the high end.

Add a midrange control in the middle for the voice or presence and you have the makings of a simple three-band EQ. On multiband graphic EQs, the bands are arranged from the lowest frequency (the bass), to middle frequencies (the midrange), to the higher frequencies (the treble). So an EQ is really an enhanced tone control for your system. There are two types of EQs on the market today: the "graphic" and the "parametric." While a parametric EQ can be beneficial in a Mobile DJ or KJ environment, it is more at home in recording studios. So let's focus on the graphic EQ.

You may have a five- or seven-band graphic EQ on your mixer. If so, you may be asking yourself: Why do I need a rackmountable outboard EQ? Good question.

When looking for an EQ, first determine what you are going to use it for. Are you going to use it in a club? For mobile work? Karaoke? Each of these applications are different, so pick an EQ right for the job. For typical DJ work, a seven-band EQ should be adequate. However, should you have a simple mixer that has only bass and treble controls or no EQ at all, you need more!

While out looking for an EQ you will probably notice that the more bands an EQ has, the more it costs. This is because the bands are narrower and more precise. These EQs usually have more than 15 bands and are divided into two channels, so you can adjust the left and right channels independently. Typically, dual 31-band EQs are the largest, but I have seen larger. This type of equalizer is mainly used for critical listening applications, such as theaters and clubs.

Next in line is the dual 15-band EQ. This is probably the one you would seek out as a Mobile DJ or KJ. It is very flexible and allows many frequency options without overkill. As a bare minimum, I don't recommend going below a 10-band EQ. If you are thinking about looking for a mixer down the road and think seven bands will be enough, then it is much more logical to purchase an EQ that is already built into the mixer.

IMPORTANT SPECS

Look for a level control for each channel on the EQ. This control will allow you to compensate for over/under gain in the system (which I will explain in a moment). Another nice feature to have is a switchable band gain control. As most EQs boost and cut their bands by ±12 dB. This switch allows you to limit the boost/cut to ±6 dB. This can be a handy feature for those jocks who can't get enough bass. Speaking of bass, a low cut switch on the unit can help reduce turntable rumble.

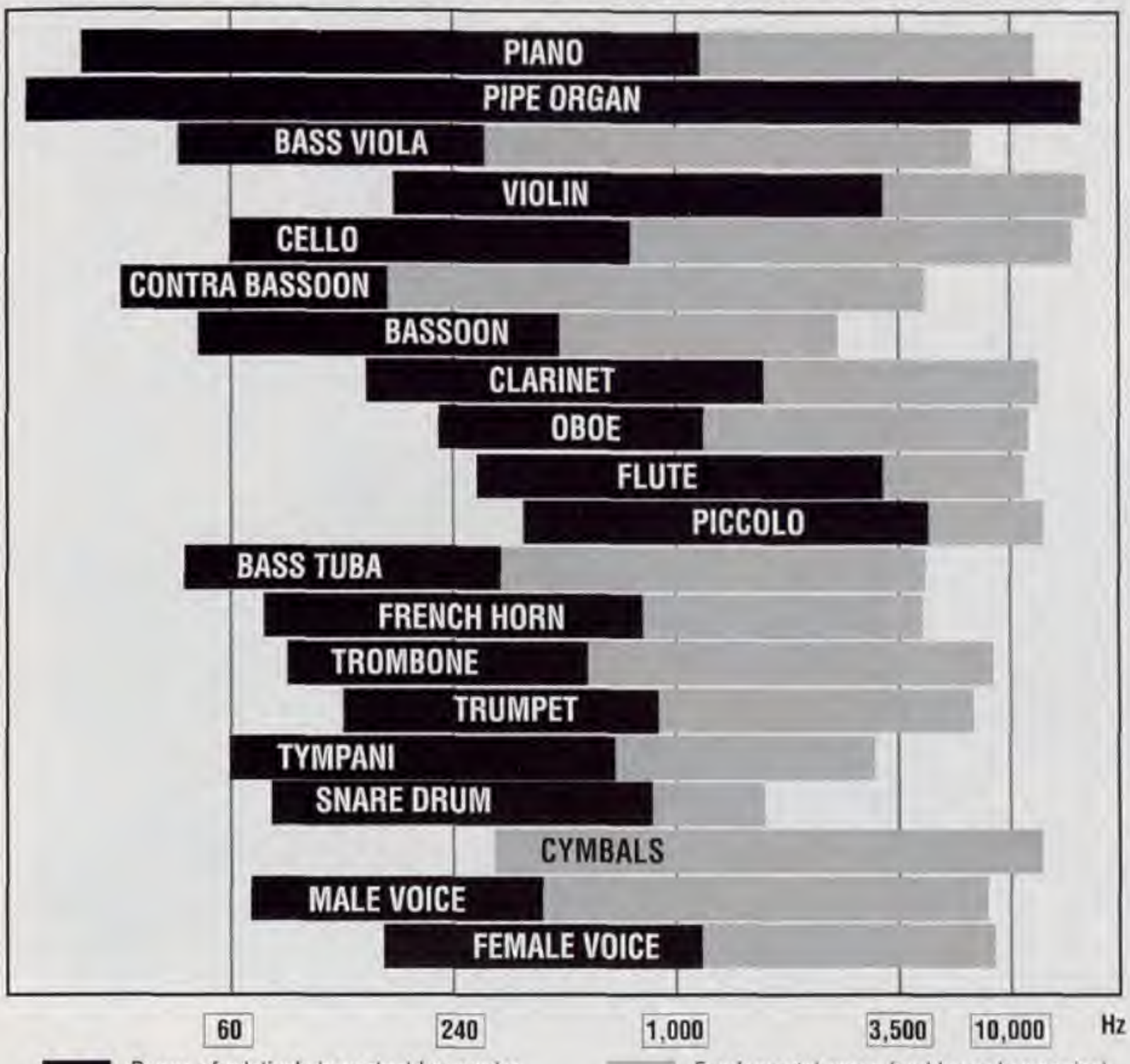
Another thing to look for in an EQ is the connections. Do you have a balanced system with balanced cable hookups? Then you should check to see if the EQ has balance capability. Most of the EQs made by Rane, Furman, American DJ Supply, Ashly, Gemini, and Numark all offer these features. Rane, Furman and Ashly are, in my opinion, top-of-the-line. American DJ Supply, Gemini and Numark offer very good introductory models at a very attractive price.

HOW'S IT WORK?

Now that you have your EQ connected to your system, the first thing to do is give it a big smiley face by boosting

FIGURE NO. 1

Approximate frequency ranges for musical instruments and voice



all the highs and lows. Looks great huh? Maybe, but that method of setting an EQ is the same as turning the bass and treble controls all the way up on your home stereo. You can do much better.

The first rule of thumb is to remember that an equalizer *equalizes* or tames unbalanced frequencies. It is not an amplifier. In recording studios, an equalizer is used to balance the acoustics in a sound room. On the road, you can virtually eliminate all the problems we mentioned earlier by properly setting your EQ.

Take a look at figure one. Note how the frequency (labeled as Hz or hertz on your EQ) relates to the music we hear. This will give you a good idea of where to start in setting up a proper equalization curve. Referring back to the problems mentioned in the first paragraph, here's how to adjust your EQ.

For this demonstration, I am using a 15-band EQ with the bands labeled as follows 20Hz, 40Hz, 60Hz, 120Hz, 250Hz, 440Hz, 500Hz, 1kHz, 1.5kHz, 2.5kHz, 4kHz, 6.5kHz, 8kHz, 16kHz, 20kHz. If the bands on yours are slightly different, just work with the control that matches closest to mine.

Let's assume the problem is that the system sounds quite different in each location even though all components are the same. Simply moving from one location in a room to another can change the sound of the system and create unwanted harshness or muddiness. Sound is very tricky like that.

Obviously, it's a good idea to allow yourself extra setup time to "ring out" the system before there's a crowd in the room. Start by critically listening to your system from different points in the room. What is the sound lacking? Where is the sound harsh, sibilant or overbearing? Referring to figure No. 1, begin by making minor adjustments to the controls. After each adjustment, walk around the room until the sound is clear and full. This takes some practice, but after you train your ear to recognize certain frequencies, it becomes very natural.

Other less obvious problems that can be corrected with an EQ are as follows:

- If you are using a budget speaker system with lower quality components, you may find that, at higher levels, the high frequency drivers (tweeters) sound like fingernails on a blackboard. To improve this condition, back down the frequency controls in the 2.5k to 5k range until that horn is bearable.
- If you are hearing a "bonk" instead of a clean beat when the drummer hits a tom-tom, adjust the 250 to 550 range. If you are hearing turntable rumble, engage the low cut filters or, better yet, drop the 25Hz control all the way down. Most musical material in the bass range never goes below 40Hz anyway, so cutting that control will remove a lot of low-end stress on your amp and help prevent amp overload, too.
- One of the most annoying sounds when amplified through a sound system is tape hiss. By reducing the 15k to 20k controls on the top end, it can be greatly reduced,

continued on p. 119

The Dynamic Duo

BY RENEÉ LASSIAL

Francisco-Javier (Frank) and Juan-Carlos (J.C.) Digon are identical twins. Except for the two minutes between their births (Frank is the eldest), the brothers have barely left each other's side. But these two brother's lives mirror more than just their reflections. The paths on which they choose to travel are identical as well. You might think they would get tired of one another; but doing so would be like getting tired of being with yourself. These guys are just that similar. So it is that the Digons have come to cooperatively operate a mobile music service, Double Image DJs, in their native city of Miami, Fla.

The brothers began their career as DJs while in their freshman year at the University of Miami. Music and performing were practically bred into J.C. and Frank. Their mother has owned an all-girl dance studio longer than they've been alive. The studio was also how they were able to afford their first mobile sound system. Every so often, J.C. explained, the studio's sound equipment would need an upgrade. So when they decided to start DJing, their mother gave them the components that were being replaced.

They have both since graduated college with identical degrees: a bachelor's in business administration in marketing, with a minor in music media industry. Now they are both attending St. Thomas University law school and intend to work in copyright law in the future.

Meanwhile, these 22-year-old go-getters continue diligently with their Mobile DJ business. Forever working as a team, J.C. takes care of the sound equipment and Frank manages the lighting. They always go on jobs together. "We're used to each other," J.C. says about their business relationship. They also do their college homework together, making sure it's done by Friday so they can concentrate on their business.

Music and dance are important and integrated aspects for the duo. When not attending college, studying, working at their own DJ business, or setting up lighting and effects for their mother's dance studio, they don't just go home and watch "Giligan's Island." They act as performing arts superintendents for the Dade County Youth Fair and Exposition, which puts on the largest South Florida dance competitions with more than 800 participants each year.

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DOUBLE IMAGE DJ's

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Being surrounded by academia and dance, it makes sense that the majority of Double Image's bookings are for school events. Typical events include: University of Miami Homecoming Dance, the Greek Ball, Dancethon, Formal Balls and various fraternity and sorority parties. J.C. and Frank, however, don't incorporate dance instruction into their DJ service. As J.C. says, it's not too tough to get 18-27 year olds up to dance all on their own. In fact, it's probably hard to get them to stop!

A definite bonus for anyone in South Florida, J.C. and Frank are bilingual. Being able to speak Spanish and English, not to mention knowing all the latest dances and the best music to dance to, enables them to relate to their specialized market of the 18- to 27-year-old generation. The fact that they are currently a part of that generation also helps (but we all know how long that lasts).

Equally impressive is the promotional package the brothers send out to their clients. It includes a professionally-typed cover letter and a five-minute video, displaying their sound and lighting performance from actual events.

How do these young guys handle it all? My guess is a very positive attitude. "The importance of success is not found exclusively by looking back. Sometimes one needs to envision the future in the potential of your market to find its true meaning," both Frank and J.C. echo, "It is the perseverance of the individual that will ultimately lead to success." If that's the case, these twins are doubly blessed for success. And no doubt, they'll find it.

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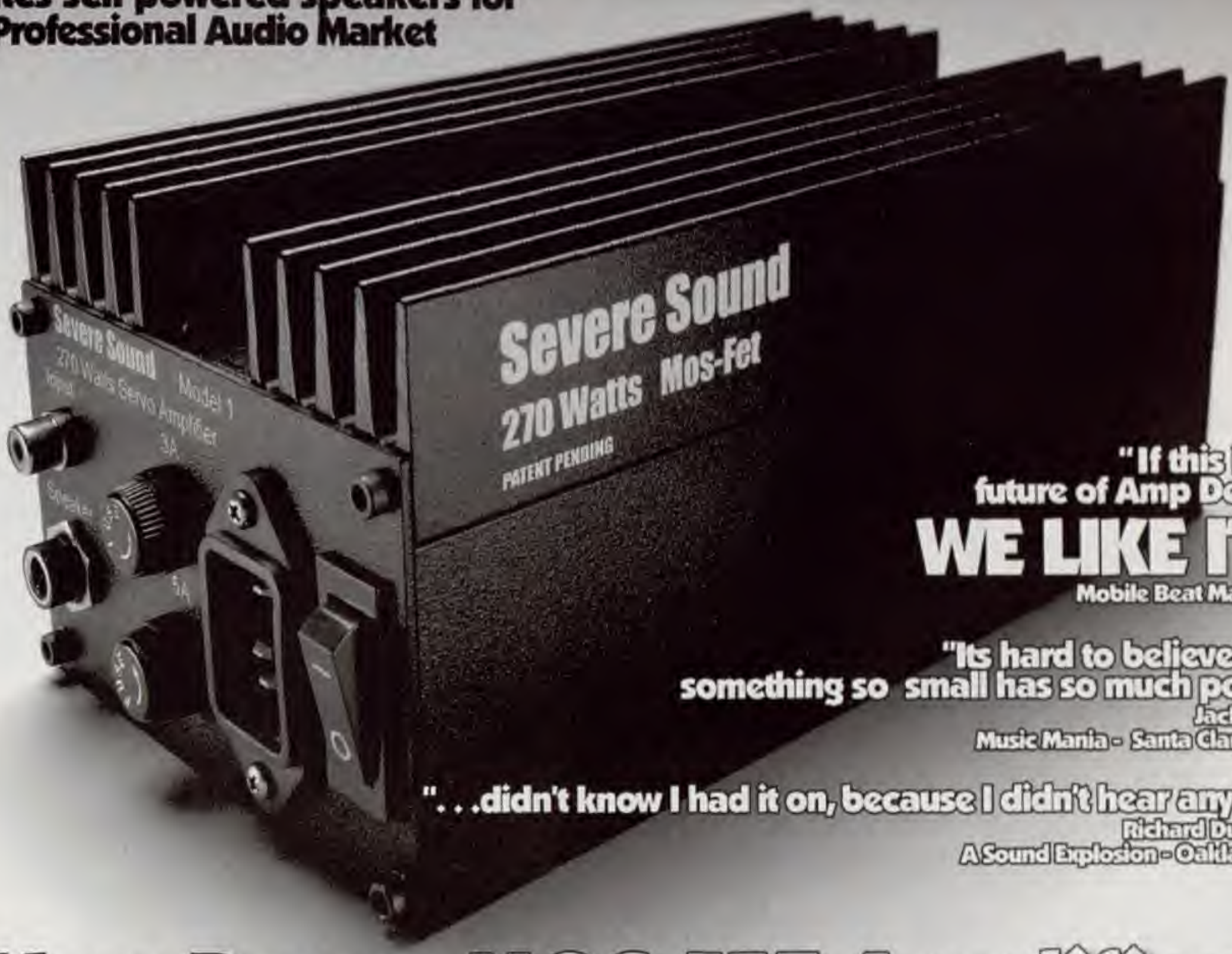

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Taylor Made

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BY STEVE WOZNIAK

One of the true joys of attending the annual *Mobile Beat DJ Show and Conference* in Las Vegas is the opportunity to meet DJs from all parts of North America. Not only is it great fun to compare notes with other professionals and profit from their experiences, but it greatly expands one's perspective on the mobile entertainment profession. Getting together with others in a convention atmosphere is really the best way to get a feel for how diverse this profession is. Not to mention the amount of talent that's out there.

With this in mind, I decided to *open the parachute* a little wider and hop a freighter to the other side of the Atlantic. I landed in Grimsby, England, where I met up with Mike Taylor, editor of *Mobile DJ Magazine*, owner of Rainbow DJ Music and a DJ on Fresh FM radio.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF AN ENGLISH DJ

It's Saturday evening and, just like back home, I am en route to a wedding reception. But this time I'm assisting Taylor, instead of being the head honcho. The wedding reception is in Lincoln, approximately 60 kilometers (40 miles) from Grimsby.

During the ride to the event, Taylor tells me he's been a DJ since 1975. Over the last 22 years, he's performed at countless private parties, including weddings, anniversaries, and birthdays. During the late '70s, he was the regular Saturday night house jock at a nightclub in Cleethorpes called "Bunny's Place."

In 1979, Taylor received the "DJ of the Year" award and began free-lancing at clubs around the U.K. After a short break between 1983 and 1985, he returned to the biz with the startup of his own mobile discotech (Mobile DJ service) called Rainbow.

The company's peak year was in 1988, when Rainbow employed 15 DJs to work events nationwide. Although his calendar was booked to the max, Taylor ran into a problem common with multi-system owners here in the United States: clients expected *him* to be

ENGLISH WEDDING TRADITION

I learned of an interesting tradition while on assignment for this ProFile. Following an investigation that would make Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson proud, I learned of the history to the common wedding tradition of the garter toss. It seems it evolved from an earlier English custom called "flinging the stocking." On the bride and groom's wedding night, the guests would follow them to their bedroom and wait until they undressed. They would then proceed to steal their stockings and then fling them at the newlyweds! According to custom, the first person to hit the bride or groom on the head would be the next person to marry. Somehow, I just can't see this practice making it in the States.

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their DJ. Not being able to be in all places all the time, he felt he was losing control of his operation. Add to this the recession that bit into the U.K. in the late '80s. By 1990, Taylor decided to downsize to just three systems, each with karaoke. Rainbow now specializes in corporate clients and cabaret work.

TIME TO GO TO WORK... ALMOST

The wedding reception is being held at a "marque" (a big tent) where, earlier today, the couple said their vows. As we arrive, everyone is taking their seats for the meal. In fact, as we enter, the best man is just beginning his toast. We'll make ourselves inconspicuous until we're told that it's okay to begin setting up.

Taylor has learned from past experience to check out these temporary sites in advance to determine if there is a proper supply of electricity or if generators will be required. As the dancefloor is usually placed right on top of the ground, he'll also check to see if it's level. If not, he's prepared to bring extra boards. And as with any job, he also likes to know in advance if there will be any obstacles that will slow loading in the sound system.

At 4:30, we're told that it will be about an hour wait. This gives us just enough time to slip away for a pint (non-alcoholic, of course) and compare notes on how we operate our services.

One of the first topics of discussion is rates and deposits. I can tell by the look on Taylor's face that this is a bit of a sore subject. No wonder. It seems a rash of payment problems have forced him, and other DJs in England, to require that all jobs be prepaid 10 days prior to the event.

"Unfortunately, during the last twelve months, we've encountered many, many checks not being honored, and we can no longer do cash pickups at an event, because a few DJs have been assaulted and robbed at the end of the evening. With prepays, we don't have to bother the customer on their special day, and we can concentrate on doing our best performance instead of collecting the balance due," says Taylor. According to him, 100 pounds sterling ($130 American) is the average fee for a typical wedding reception in his area. On New Year's Eve, Mobile DJs often charge about 400 pounds ($600 American).

Time flies by quickly and, as we return to the tent, the caterers are removing the tables and laying out the dancefloor. The guests are milling around outside the tent, enjoying the evening air. By 6 p.m., Taylor and I have the sound system set up and do a brief sound check. We're ready to go. We're scheduled to play from 7:30 to midnight, which is somewhat average, although it depends greatly on the licenses in the area. Some establishments are permitted to go to 1-2 a.m. Others end much earlier.

Much like receptions back in the states, the meal (usually a buffet) leads off the event. The bride and groom go first, followed by their parents and then everyone else.

"I just hope that we can get certified," he confides. "If certification or licensing were required, DJs would benefit because they would be able to show their customers that they really care..."

The dance portion begins with the bride and groom's first dance. Taylor adds some nice lighting and a little fog for mood. Following the traditional dances, Taylor leads off with a slow set to get things started. Then he quickly picks up the pace with rock and roll, chart music, and party songs. The British duo, Black Lace (*Agadoo*), who were introduced to North American DJs at the show in Waterloo in March of '97, remain a popular source for interactive party songs in the U.K.

As the evening begins

The Mobile DJ Magazine, England

to spin down, Taylor switches back to the "slowies" for the "smoochie-nits." Then he hits the big finale of the evening with everyone in a big circle and the newlyweds in the center. First, we play *You'll Never Walk Alone* by Jerry & the Pacemakers, followed by *I Will Always Love You* by Whitney Houston. The guests form a "gantry" in two lines. The newlyweds walk in between to exchange farewells and then leave.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

Taylor is quite serious about the Mobile DJ industry. "I just hope that we can get certified," he confides. "If certification or licensing were required, DJs would benefit because they would be able to show their customers that they really care. The customer would then accept the Mobile DJ industry as a true profession and agree to pay more money. The way things are today, there is so much propaganda out there, it's tough to know who offers what to whom."

In addition to his DJ business, in 1995 Taylor launched a bimonthly publication entitled *Mobile DJ Magazine*. Similar in ways to *Mobile Beat*, the *Mobile DJ Magazine* offers industry news, personality profiles, and product reviews. "I am currently touring the U.K. to promote the magazine to retailers," says Taylor. It's very, very hard work doing the magazine, working as operations manager and presenter on Fresh FM radio and entertaining at two functions per week. Fortunately, I get lots of support from my wife, Amanda, and son Daniel."

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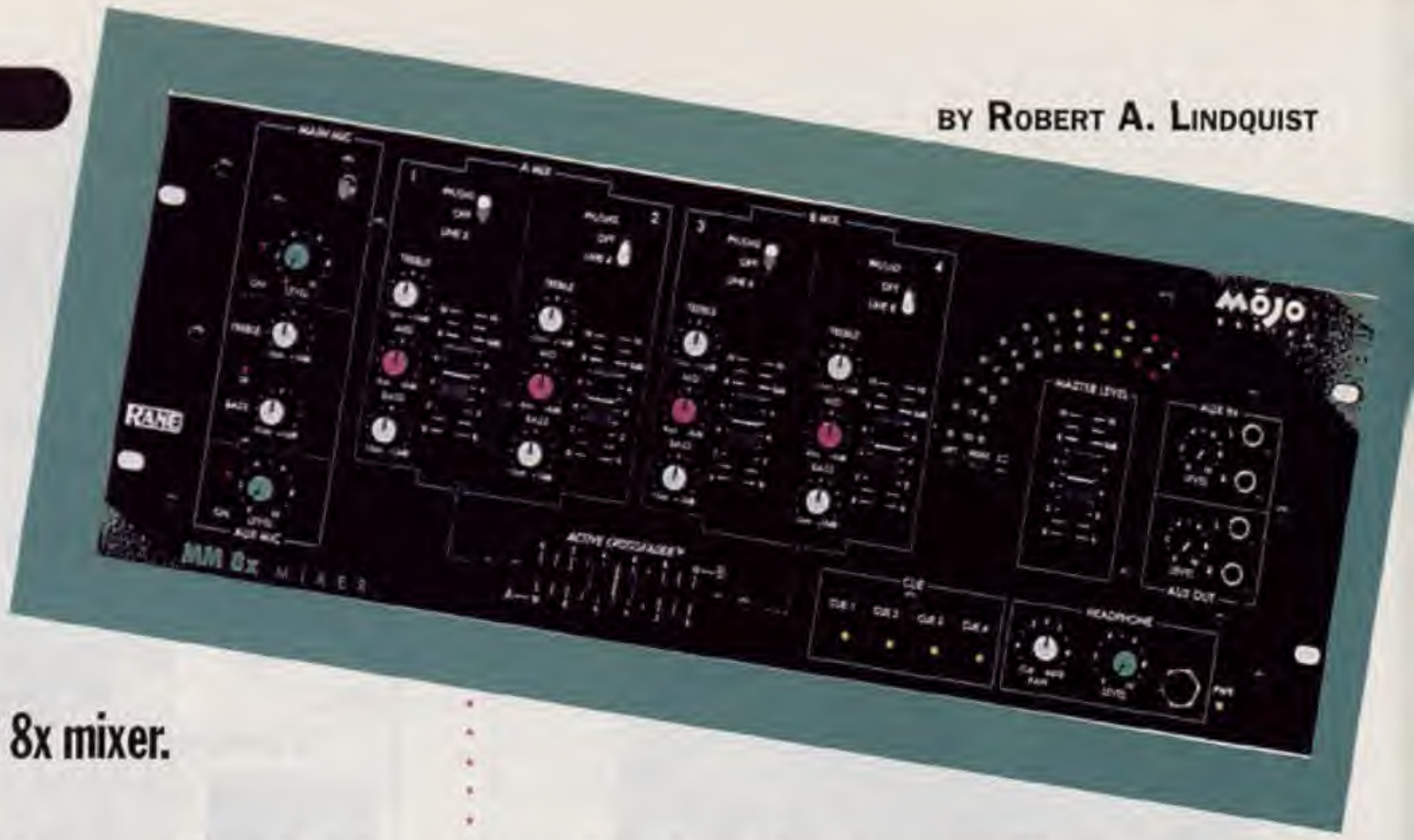

BY ROBERT A. LINDQUIST

There's magic in the MM 8x mixer.

When a new mixer shows up at No. 1 Mobile Beat Tower, it typically sparks an air of jubilation and excitement among the present and former mobiles on staff. If it happens to be a mixer from Rane, it's a double thrill. The Mukilteo, Wash. company has been up to bat twice before and put 'em neatly over the fence both times. So is it any wonder that when the new Mojo MM 8x arrived, I nearly sliced off a digit with the box knife in eager anticipation?

With the MP22 and MP24 mixers and the birth of the Mojo line last year, Rane proved that their commitment to the DJ market is genuine. As a result, Rane has garnered a reputation for high quality, "not-for-everyone" audio tools that do their jobs very well. To a large extent, the Mojo MM 8x is a result of the growing popularity with DJs.

CHECK THIS OUT

The layout of the MM 8x is a subtle departure from the norm. All the controls on the MM 8x are right where they're supposed to be and very well labeled. Even with a total of six sliders, 20 rotary controls, 11 switches and six jacks on the front panel, the layout is neat as a pin. Everything is so obvious that even a novice should have no question as to what does what.

To the far left are the microphone (mic) controls. At the top, is an XLR input for the main mic grouped with controls for level, bass and treble. At the bottom is the level control for the auxiliary (aux) mic. There is a second XLR jack for the main mic, and 1/4-inch jack for the aux mic on the back panel (use either XLR, not both).

To the right of the mic control cluster are the controls for the four input channels. Each of the four inputs is equipped with bass, mid and treble controls and can accommodate either a turntable or two lines. This gives the MM 8x capability for up to eight line sources and four turntables. Interestingly, channels one and two have been sub-grouped together as the "A" mix, and channels three and four are called the "B" mix. The two mixes are then tied together with the crossfader. For the performance DJ who uses backgrounds and sound effects in the mix, this is a plus as it facilitates creating two separate submixes and then crossfading between them.

For the typical mobile who accesses music from a dual CD player, two turntables, or cassette decks, it means you can't use just channels one and two if you want to use the crossfader. If you're using two turntables, you would want them assigned to channels two and three, which would cluster all the necessary controls in a tight pattern above the crossfader. While I hesitate to call this an innovation, it no way detracts from its performance, and is certainly one feature that gives this mixer some individuality.

The final third of the faceplate is home to a master level control, cue buttons, headphone controls and a bonus line input and output. A double row of LEDs arch up and over the master control. The zero dB point is placed right at 12 o'clock. The LEDs effectively separate the master from the channel controls while increasing operator awareness to what's going to the amplifier. If the lights are arching past the top of the master slider, you're into overdrive; time to pull back on the master. Whoever at Rane came up with that one deserves a gold star and free espresso for a month (trendy drink for a trendy company).

To the right of the master is another idea worthy of a gold star. While I really don't like seeing RCA jacks on the face of a mixer (actually, I just don't like RCA

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Notes From The Field #2

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jacks...period), the Mavens of Mojo have put aux in and aux out jacks, with level controls, right on the front of the MM 8x. Should you ever need to patch in a backup CD player, CD+G player, tape deck, or other line input on the fly, you can do it without a screwdriver without missing a beat.

Cue buttons for each channel are placed in a cluster to the left and just below the master. An LED glows when a channel is in cue. To the right of the cue buttons are controls for the headphones, including pan and level controls. With the pan control, the headphone send can be the main out, the cue channel or a blend of the two for rehearsing a mix. With a 220mW output into 150 ohms, there's plenty of juice to drive the Stanton 1001 Pro headphones.

Enhancing the works of the faceplate is an "artsy" teal and white paint job. Not only is it very classy and professional, it is quite functional in separating the controls into their individual clusters. If you are wondering where the power switch is, there isn't one. Considering that you should always turn the mixer on first (and the amp last) to reduce pops to the crowd, who needs one?

A REAR VIEW

The back panel is just as neat as the front with inputs and outputs grouped in a logical fashion. For the main outputs, 1/4-inch TRS jacks are provided. An improvement over RCA jacks (did I mention I don't like RCA jacks?), but not as good as XLRs. The power requirement for the unit specifies an 18 volt AC transformer, which is supplied. While the connector resembles a telephone jack, the owner's manual says it's not. Seems like kind of a funky way to hook up the power, but Rane claims that getting the transformer out of the mixer itself improves performance. Being that transformers can induce hum, this sounds very logical.

Another interesting feature is the program loop for external processing of the program signal which utilizes 1/4-inch TRS plugs. The tips connect the sends to the processor, the rings connect to the returns. There's a similar jack for the main mic, and a pre/post switch so you can record either with or without the processing. While this design is quite typical in concert and studio applications, it lacks familiarity with DJs. Anytime the same plug is used as an input and an output, I get nervous. Given that connectors are the number one cause of problems on the road, I can hear this timebomb ticking. I would have rather seen separate ins and outs with RCA jacks, and did I mention... I don't like RCA jacks?

LET'S TRY IT OUT

As expected, the MM 8x performs just as good on the road as on the test bench. It is easy to configure, regardless of music sources. There's plenty of spacing between all the controls so there's no excuse for fumbling. There's an "off" position on both mics and all four channels to eliminate any noise from an unused channel. When the mic channel is live, a red LED blinks (eliminating all excuses as to how that remark you made about the bride's mom got out over the speakers). Having bass and treble controls on the main mic is a plus. Not having them on the aux mic input is a minus. Most DJs would use the 1/4-inch aux jacks for a wireless mic, which is usually the one that needs the EQ.

The sliders have a positive feel and are linear from top to bottom. Rane is particularly proud of their active crossfader which, they claim, makes a big step forward in eliminating crossfader noise. Even with all the sliders, including the master, at full-on and the Ashly SRA 120 amps cranked to the max, noise through the system was barely audible. And while your audiences may expect, and even take for granted, a good sounding system, there's nothing that will send 'em home quicker than background noise and distortion. With this mixer as the heart of your system, the crowd may want to follow you home.

With the MP22 and MP24 mixers and the birth of the Mojo line last year, Rane proved that their commitment to the DJ market is genuine. As a result, Rane has garnered a reputation for high quality, audio tools that do their jobs very well.

THE MOBILE MOJO

As with all good things, our 30 days with the Mojo MM 8x came swiftly to an end. It was time to put it back in the box and waft it Raneward. The final analysis? This is a good all purpose mixer. And while its features target it more toward the club or remix DJ, it certainly has a place in mobile systems as well. Hopefully, Rane's next project will be to build the "Totally Mobile Mojo." It would offer XLR outputs, a stereo/mono switch, l/r balance control and a built-in, adjustable, compressor/limiter. To control costs, lose the phono amps and inputs. There are plenty of mixers available for the decreasing number of DJs who use turntables. I'm looking forward to one purposely designed for today's total CD/MD mobiles. It would be the Mojo for the millennium! For more information, contact Rane Corporation, 10802 47th Ave. W., Mukilteo, WA 98275-5098. Phone: 425-355-6000. Website: www.rane.com

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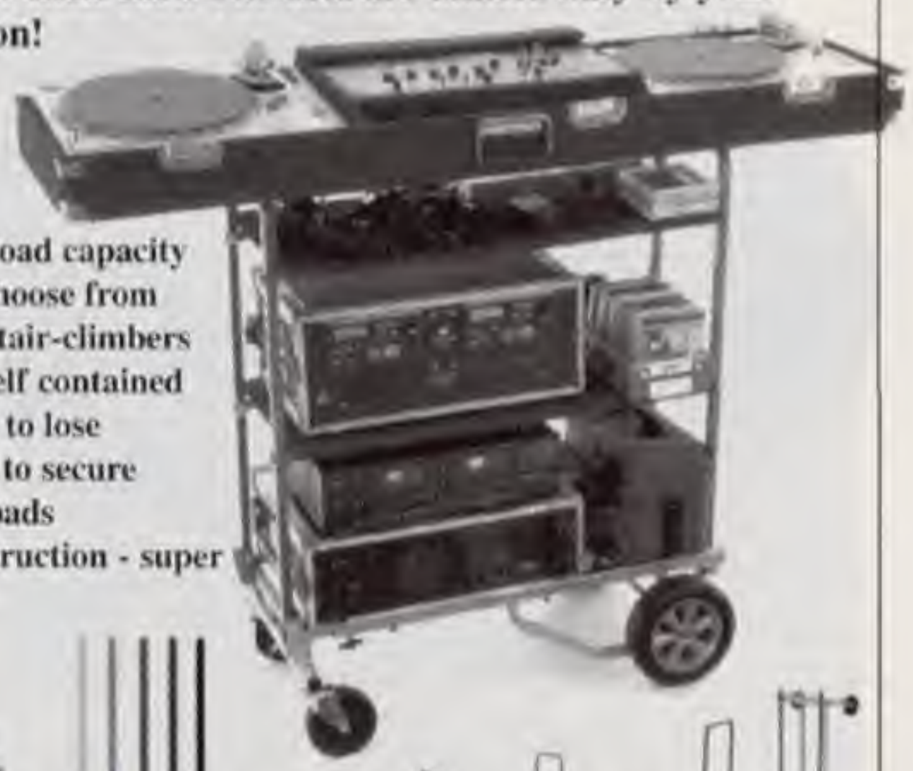

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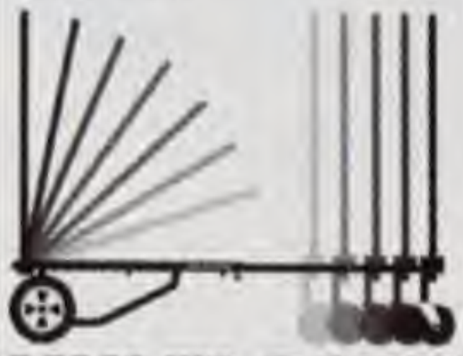

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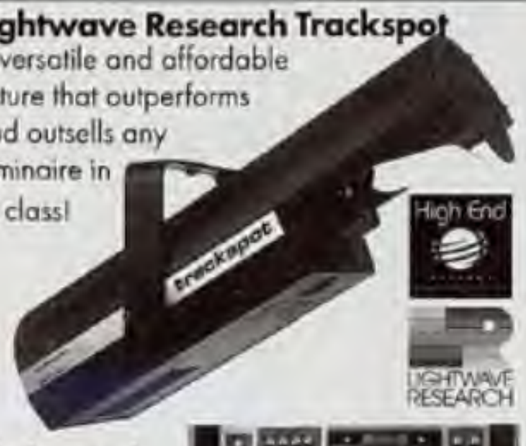

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Numark DM1635 Mixer with Beatkeeper

BY STEPHAN "ISLAND JAKE" JACOB

The result of combining creative thinking with good proven ideas.

The most enjoyable thing about reviewing new equipment is getting a chance to look, touch, and operate other people's ideas. The Numark DM1635 mixer sports a bevy of features based on solid ideas from mixers past and present combined with ideas that foretell a bright future.

Visually, the DM1635 follows the trend away from the standard white on black paint schemes with a dash of color to individualize its appearance in the growing sea of competitors. Garnet blue highlights a very practical feature, which is the highlight of this review—the Beatkeeper.

NUMARK DM1635 MIXER WITH ONBOARD BEATKEEPER

Mixer features

8 line, 3 switchable phono, 2 mic inputs
Dual 6-ban graphic EQ
Master and booth level controls
Stereo/Mono switch on the master
Effects send on all input channels for adding outboard sampler or digital effects
Dedicated DJ mic channel w/2 band EQ and talk-over dual control
Fully assignable replaceable crossfader
High power headphone output
Push button cueing
Highend performance audio signal
Neutrik mic connector (1/4" or XLR)
12V BNC light connector

The Beatkeeper Features

Auto BPM tracking up to 8 input sources
Accurate digital BPM displays
Visual live tracking of mix
Visual displays update every beat
Sync lock button

Numark Industries

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Providence, RI 02907
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EXPECTATIONS

With a list price of $690, this new board from Numark is on target in terms of what should be expected in this mid-price range. It offers four channels with inputs for up to three phonos or four line inputs. A replaceable crossfader with OFF position facilitates fading between any two channels. A MONO/STEREO switch is positioned right above the master. This is more than just a handy feature. There are times, particularly for mobiles, when being able to run in mono is preferable, yet it's a feature that even some higher-priced mixers leave off.

Beyond these basics, there are two mic inputs. The combo XLR/1/4-inch jack for the DJ mic is placed in the upper left hand corner. The second mic input connects via a 1/4-inch jack on the back. A single set of treble and bass controls effect both mics. If you are using two mics that sound about the same, this is an advantage. If you are using two mics with different personalities, a two-band EQ that effects each of the mics separately would be more useful. Your choice. Personally, I would have preferred the two-band EQ either be assignable to either mic or work only with one. This would make it possible to match the user replaceable and assignable crossfader.

Speaking of EQ, there are six bands, split for the left and right channels on board. The sliders for the EQ are well-spaced for easy adjustability.

Other features include: master and zone volume levels, separate tape outjacks, push button cueing and split cue headphone monitoring with crossfader.

THE BEATKEEPER

For years, DJs have been calculating beats per minute by tapping their fingers or toes while watching the second hand sweep around a wrist watch. All for the sake of creating smooth mixes or segues. Thankfully those days are long gone.

The Beatkeeper features beats per minute (BPM) tracking of all eight input sources using large and bright red dual LEDs. Surrounding the two BPM windows are three parallel rows of vertical LEDS (like those used on the output meter), two above and one row below.

The row below each BPM window is arranged into two groups of four to indicate which channel/source you are monitoring. Just above each BPM window are two sets of dual LEDS for both down beat and peak indicators.

Above those four are two rows of 11 LEDS. The lower grouping indicates beat offset, while the above array indicates tempo difference. These two groups are broken into "stop light" red, yellow, and green indicators. The colors refer to the

continued on page 119

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KAM

BY JAMMIN' JIM KERINS

APi VF-8002

Dual wireless system takes a lickin' at karaoke show

I am deep in concentration, trying to get my two thousand dollar computer to behave as well as my thirty dollar answering machine. Suddenly, the phone rings through my multimedia surround sound speakers. I anxiously grab the mouse by the tail and begin clicking the telephone message screen. By the fourth and final ring, it's obvious I'm headed for digital defeat. I yell, "*#@!*ing machine!" I reach for the phone and happily pay the 75 cent charge for *66 to find out who just called.

As I'm waiting for someone to answer, I wonder, "Who could it be?" Cindy from the local all-girl college wanting me to DJ for a sorority dance or lingerie party? No such luck. It was those wacky folks at *Mobile Beat* again.

I humbly accepted the honor of reviewing the VF-8002 wireless microphone from APi. Now if you are like me and the other karaoke hosts, you've had your microphones dropped so many times they feel more like maracas than mics and are about on par with your alarm clock's AM radio for sound quality. The chance to let my audience destroy someone else's mics was very exciting.

I took the system for a test run at Big Karaoke Night at my hometown bar, Buffalo Bill's. I think it was named for that famous (so famous I can't remember his last name) western dude, Buffalo Bill. Or maybe it was named for that waning-in-popularity western N.Y. football team. I can't seem to remember their name either. You know the ones who lost the Super Bowl like four times? I really think the bar is named for the football team but, guess what, it's closed on Monday nights... duh.

I set up my gear, speakers, amps, yadda yadda and then return to my van to retrieve the technological centerpiece of the evening, the APi dual mic, dual channel, wireless system. Setting up the system is easy. The system comes in an ATA style road case and every component is nicely packed into custom foam cut outs. Seems cool so far. The system contains a dual channel receiver (standard 19-inch rackmountable), two black wireless mics, power supply, and two quarter-inch cables for hooking the system up to your mixer. Finally the piece de la resistance: two (not one, but two) almost dead 9-volt batteries. Yes, they thought of everything. Everything except mic clips.

Having broken, I mean used, many wireless systems, I was impressed as to how well the batteries I finally obtained fit into the microphone compartments. The units also have a power and mute switch located on the bottom of the mics. Having the mute switch handy is great, but I prefer to have the power switch located out of reach of karaoke singers' fidgeting fingers. You know the potential for disaster. Inevitably, as someone is singing a song and I'm at the bar trying to enjoy some well earned liquid refreshment, the singer hits the power switch, sending my sound system into 120dB white noise overload. I run for the board to fix the problem, while the entire bar assumes I'm the technological idiot, not the singer, trailer court Mary.

Having no space in my rack, I placed the receiver on top of the system. The unit has two front mounted black antennae that move around all over the place, so you can position them where they won't poke your eyes out. Front controls include: two RF (radio frequency), two AF (audio frequency) LEDs, power switch, and two level controls. The rear panel has two quarter-inch audio outputs and extra antenna connectors for optional rear mounting.

PERFORMANCE IS KEY

I fired my system up for the night. Normally, I use Shure SM58 mics or some low end brand mic (for people with cold sores). Immediately, I walked out front with both wireless mics to get a feel for the tone and range. I was impressed with the clarity of the mics. They are perhaps not as natural sounding as a standard Shure SM58, but have an out front quality about them. Throughout the room, the mics never cut out. But the big test was yet to come.

The majority of the evening was filled with the usual, but that night I got the real classic, "Minga Mike." He's the guy who drives a Camaro and wears two hundred gold chains and a button down polyester shirt with little tufts of body hair poking through the chains—you know the type. And, of course, he has to cup the mic like the rappers on MTV—how annoying.

The more "Minga Mike" got into singing, the more my anxiety began to rise. You could practically see the testosterone oozing out of his ears and dripping onto the mic. Did you ever watch anyone sing? I mean really closely. They spit and spew. And "Minga Mike" was no exception. He was really into pronouncing each and every syllable, while showering the mic and everyone within a 5-foot radius with saliva. He was sweating so much, even his gold chains were wet! (Fortunately, I disinfect everything, or at least let it air dry for a day.) Then a friend of Mike's interrupts him to inform him that his car alarm went off. Mike flings the microphone on the floor and runs out to check on his precious baby.

Anyway, the APi mics performed very well. The sound was just fine and range was excellent. And they're pretty durable except, of course, for "Minga Mike's" personalization (the rather large dent).

For Information contact: APi U.S.A. 935 Terminal Way, San Carlos, CA 94070.
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VF-8002 Transmitter

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Frequency response: 33Hz - 16kHz
Modulation: 15kHz deviation
Signal to Noise: Better than 90dB
T.H.D.: Less than .1% @ 1kHz
Battery type: 9V alkaline
Nominal battery life: 10 hours

VF-8002 Receiver:

Receive frequency range: 195.0 - 230.0 MHz/10 channels
AC requirements: 110V
Signal Sensitivity: 16 dBu @ s/n 58 dB
T.H.D.: Less than 1% @ 1kHz
Frequency response: 35-16kHz
Audio connectors: 1/4" (unbalanced) x 2
Power consumption: 7 watts

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BY ROBERT A. LINDQUIST

A Severe Threat?

Small startup company throws a brick at the big guys.

This just can't be an audio amplifier. Amps are much larger and heavier. Amps have lots of inputs and outputs. Amps have LEDs, switches, meters and lights. But this is an amp. In fact, it appears, in this initial test anyway, to be a very good amp.

Severe Sound is a small research and development company in Florida which has been designing products for other companies for quite some time. In the course of doing what they do, they invented a unique way to build incredibly efficient and affordable Mos-Fet amplifiers.

About the size (3"H x 4"W x 7.5"L) and weight of a four-pound building brick, Severe Sound's introductory effort, appropriately named *Model One*, claims a conservatively rated power output of 150 watts into 8 ohms and 270 watts into 4 ohms.

NOT RACKABLE?

No, you don't rackmount the Severe Sound Model One; you bolt it to the back of your speaker. Instead of running a speaker wire, you run a balanced or unbalanced line right out of your mixer or processor. A 20-foot two conductor cable with RCA plugs on both ends is provided. I immediately questioned the use of RCA jacks on a professional amplifier and was told that the tiny faceplate and desire to keep this model under $300 influenced the decision. Once into full production, we should see models that offer XLRs or 1/4-inch jacks as an option on the input. Currently, the output uses just a 1/4-inch jack.

Also located on the faceplate are two fuse receptacles, the AC power connector and an on/off switch. That's it for the controls. The amp is air-cooled, relying on the dissipation ability of the aluminum fins. For protection, fuses guard the input and output stages and a feedback servo circuit removes power at clipping or if distortion exceeds .05 percent.

LIKE A TON OF BRICKS

During our tests, we subjected the unit to multiple eight-hour duty cycles. At various times, and at different volume levels, we would disconnect and reconnect the inputs and outputs in an effort to induce some type of failure. The amp passed without a hitch. To test the protection circuitry, we shorted out one of the speakers, which instantaneously blew the output fuse, as expected. This is why you never want to leave home without spare fuses. Future models, we understand, will have circuit breakers instead of fuses.

We ran the amp, in series, into two MTX speakers. Our input device was the Numark DM 1635 mixer (reviewed in this issue). With a four ohm load, there was plenty of drive for any small to medium sized hall. Even after four hours, the cooling fins were barely warm.

Since there are no volume controls on the amp, it runs at full output all the time. Your room volume is controlled entirely by the mixer. In operation, the amp was extremely quiet except for an annoying low-level "pop" each time it was switched on. In an A-B test with an amp, from a different manufacturer with a similar output rating, we found that the Severe Sound Model One squeezed a noticeable amount of extra bass punch from our 12" two-way test speakers. We then hooked it up to a Sonic DJX1510/SCF400 subwoofer cabinet. That punch turned into a strong and heavy low thump. The manufacturer claims a dynamic range of 4Hz to 20K. Granted, 4Hz is well below the average person's hearing range and beyond what most speakers can reproduce; but it does seem to squeeze every bit of bass potential out of the speakers. If you have been looking for a simple way to add bottom to your sound, combining one of these small amps with a matched subwoofer would certainly make a difference.

YOU CAN'T LOSE

Beyond that, there's not much more to say about this miniature power house. As far as appearance and features, it's about as back-to-the-basics as you can get. In terms of technology, the new switch mode servo Mos-Fet design makes this a marvel of efficiency.

As for reliability, only time will tell. The company claims that they have put several dozen out in the field and have had no problems. The standard warranty is one year with a flat rate of $100 for repairs after that time. Plus, there's a 14-day no-questions-asked return policy. If you buy and decide you don't like it, they'll give you a full refund.

So is this an amp you should buy? While it would be nice to have some long-term reliabilty data to quote, we don't. Except for that "pop" at power up, the amp does its job quite well. The sound is very good. It has definite possibilities as a subwoofer amp, and for performers who like the idea of having each speaker powered by a dedicated amp. When you toss into the equation a cost of just $279, which works out to under a $1.50 per watt and 50 watts per pound well, if this is the future of amp design, how could we not like it?

For more information, contact Severe Sound, 7651 N.W. 6th Street, Pembroke Pines, FL 33024; tel: (954) 986-1794.

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GEMINI CD-9800 Dual CD	
GEMINI CD-100 CD w/Pitch	
GEMINI CD-4700 Single CD	
JVC XL-P63 PORTABLE CD	
DENON DN-2000 DUAL CD	
DENON DN-2500 Dual CD	
DENON DN-M2000R MD	
DENON DN-T620 CD/TAPE	
PIONEER DJ SYSTEMS	
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BY STEPHAN "ISLAND JAKE" JACOB

Gemini's Cracker Jack

Improvements in the 9800 dual CD player are more than peanuts, but I'm still looking for the prize.

As a kid, one of my favorite snacks was Cracker Jack®. Not only was there the mouth watering, sweet and salty combination of popcorn, molasses, and peanuts, but there was always a nifty, hidden prize in every box. Great munchies and entertainment to boot, all at a reasonable price. Those were the days.

I recently found a coupon for Cracker Jack and couldn't resist a stroll down memory lane. How times have changed. The familiar box now sports a waving flag informing the consumer of the 2.5 grams of fat per serving. How '90s. I quickly poured out a handfull. As I fervently examined the stash, I thought, "Hey... where are the peanuts?"

As for the prize... I remember it always offered significant entertainment value for hours of joy. The highly regarded prize I received this time, however, was a tiny, poorly registered color baseball card that no 10-year-old would give a second look to, much less collect. What's this got to do with the Gemini CD-9800 dual CD player?

LOOKING BACK

My first dual CD player was a Numark 5020, purchased around 1989. It was kind of like how I remember Cracker Jack. It looked good, worked pretty well and had a few cool features. Overall, it was a good first generation machine, but there was nothing to compare it to.

Next came the Denon 2000 with instant start capability and highly accurate cueing buttons. I thought I'd gone to DJ heaven. The Denon gained quick success with its accurate CD manipulation and DJ friendly features, but its price was on the high side. Then came Gemini's debut effort: the 9500. At $200-$300 less than the Denon, the price was nice. But, in addition to lacking remaining time, continuous or single selection and slow cue-up, the 9500's instant start wasn't exactly instant.

So now it's on to the CD-9800. It's a new day, a new machine and, to continue the analogy, a new box of Cracker Jacks. The prize I'm fervently searching for is instant start capability. To really evaluate this machine's strongest and weakest points, I decided to give it a workout in both club and mobile environments.

WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS?

The improvements of the CD-9800 over the 9500 are numerous and welcome. The controller now has two large jog wheels for enhanced and faster cueing. Both wheels feature a course outer ring for large adjustments and a "finger pod" for fine adjustments. By all accounts, these work great.

The next big addition is direct track access buttons. Instead of being arranged in the traditional 4 x 3 button grid, they are set in a row just above a sharp looking LED display.

Speaking of the display, the "Halloween" orange glow has been replaced with business gray and reddish-orange against an opaque black background. Regardless of what angle you view it from, you should be able to clearly read the characters with ease. The display confirms play and pause status, which is further verified by a static or blinking green LED located near the operational controls. Located to the right of each display, is a time button which lets you select between real time, remaining track time, and remaining disc time. It still features the accepted standard readout of minute, seconds and frames; plus the playback display flashes rapidly when there are 5 seconds left on the track.

The pitch control section now includes à la carte choices of ± 4, 8, or 16 percent. My only additional request in this section directed at both Gemini and Denon would be to copy the Pioneer pitch/tempo control, which increases the beats per minute without distorting the vocals. Although the slider on the pitch control felt smoother than on the 9500, its response level was still on the sluggish side.

The final new features of note are dual cue buttons for setting custom cue points and a BNC digital output jack.

NICE TOUCH

In the single mode, an auto cue function locates the beginning of the music program on each track, advancing past any blank space. In continuous mode, the unit will play through the entire disc. In addition, you have the option of setting one or two custom cue points using the *Cue 1* and *Cue 2* buttons along with the search jog wheel. You can also activate the set cue button, located near the time button, and input a predetermined numeric cue point in real time with the direct access buttons.

One of the most improved areas of the CD-9800 is the overall tactile feel of the controls and various buttons. In addition to increased sensitivity, when each button is depressed a two-stage "clicking" sound is heard as well as felt. This sound may not be heard in high volume environments, but the feel is so distinct you would be immediately aware of a particular button's activation status.

LET'S ROCK AND ROLL

For the first part of this test, I swapped the Gemini 9800 with a Denon 2000 at the club. The Gemini's controller was an additional rack space wider, while the drawer section was about the same size. The switch took far less time than expected, which left me with a few extra minutes to get to know the CD-9800. Drawer opening and closing and auto cue times are about average and certainly an improvement over the 9500.

Segués, if well planned, are the strong suit of this new model. Three other seasoned performers gave the CD-9800 a spin and, try as they did, couldn't beat mix consistently because of an inconsistent delay in the actuation of the play mode. Although the specs claim 0.03 seconds, at times it felt more like a quarter of a second. Our consensus was that Pioneer and Denon still had the edge on Gemini in this area. The pitch bend buttons and pitch control, as expected, were up to contemporary standards. Once you gain familiarity with the Cue 1 and Cue 2 buttons, you can use them just as you would a sampler, but it takes some practice.

For part two of the test, I took the CD-9800 to a small wedding reception the next afternoon. The delay in the actuation of the play mode is less significant in this type of setting. The direct access buttons proved to be real handy for quick track selection; and the set cue command is a great time-saver when you know the point you're looking for.

Overall, I found the CD-9800 to be a major step forward in terms of design and features. One of it's weaker points is the user's manual (written in five languages) that just doesn't do justice to the capabilities of the player. Even if you speak all five languages, you'll still find some of the descriptions ambiguous and confusing. This machine deserves better. Then there's that darn inconsistency in the activation of the play mode. For the typical mobile, this will probably go unnoticed. Club spinners, on the other hand, will want to give the 9800 a good work out before putting one in the booth, just to make sure it won't be a problem for any of the house jocks. So while the free prize (true instant start capability) was missing from the box, everything else was there making the Gemini CD-9800 a real Cracker Jack machine.

MOBILE BEAT TEST BENCH

Other products used in this test:

- Numark 1635 mixer
- American DJ WR-100 microphone
- BST JMA 600N amplifier
- Colorado Sound N' Light Workstation

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TubeWORKS unveils motorized air-powered confetti blaster

TubeWORKS' ConfettiBlaster™ is a high-powered automated system which provides a continuous stream of confetti over party-goers' heads.

The ConfettiBlaster is designed to be a multi-functional unit: operating on the ground, an elevated surface, mounted to a lighting truss or attached to overhead areas. Until now, confetti had to be shot out of low capacity air cannons, and reloaded after a one-second blast. The ConfettiBlaster delivers an instantaneous and continuous stream of confetti. It also shoots many other low density products, including theatrical snow. The duration of the blast is limited only by the amount of product placed into the reservoir, designed to be loaded once and activated many times.

The unit has a built-in 1.5 gallon reservoir, and peripheral attachments are available, allowing up to a 55-gallon capacity. Additionally, because of the unit's energy saving motor, many units can be linked together for large-scale events, allowing for synchronous blasting.

About the size of a suitcase, the ConfettiBlaster's 190 mph winds blast enough confetti to fill very large areas. The ConfettiBlaster carries a 30-day warranty on all mechanically defective parts. All ConfettiBlaster assembly is performed at the TubeWORKS U.S. facility. Dealer inquiries are welcome.

TubeWORKS makes a variety of high-performance display devices. For additional information contact, TubeWORKS at (818) 879-2386 or (800) 962-2556.

Red Sound Systems - Voyager 1 Beat Xtractor

New from the UK company, Red Sound Systems, the Voyager 1 Beat Xtractor breaks new ground for remix DJs. With Voyager 1, DJs can add riffs or complete tracks to existing material by synchronizing their own MIDI gear to an audio source such as CD players, tape machines or vinyl recordings. While constantly monitoring and displaying an audio track's BPM, the Voyager 1 generates a stable MIDI clock signal in sync with the audio track, enabling any connected MIDI sequencer or sound module, such as the Roland MC303, EMU's Orbit/Planet Phatt, or QuasiMidi's Rave-o-lution, to automatically lock in and track the tempo of the audio. Utilizing the Voyager 1, the tempo of patterns and songs within a sequencer can now be controlled directly from an audio track leaving the DJ or operator free to overlay his or her own individual musical pieces and percussion parts, either live or in the studio. A further application allows drummers to actually control the tempo of their band's MIDI sequences by feeding a mixed signal from a kit into the Voyager 1. Other features include two individual audio input channels with BPM displays, MIDI clock rotating display, MIDI out, run/pause, cue, beat one reset, and tap controls. Housed in a durable steel case, the unit is available in both a standard blue or limited-edition chrome plate finish. For further information (including prices), contact: Red Sound Systems, Ltd. Chancery Court Business Centre, Lincolns Inn, Lincoln Road, High Wycombe, Bucks HP12 3RE, England. Tel: + 44 (0) 1494 429321.
Internet: http://www.redsound.com

Denon does Vegas

The Motown Café, in Las Vegas' New York, New York Hotel and Casino, has installed a Denon DN-2000F MKII double CD player in its DJ booth.

Every 20 minutes throughout the day, the 800-seat Motown-theme restaurant features the "Motown Café Moments" on stage, performing classic R&B songs from the '50s and '60s. Then, every night at 11 p.m., the café transforms into a dance club with popular '70s disco and '80s funk music on the Denon CD player.

Designed specifically for DJs, the DN-2000F MKII double CD player is an upgrade of the industry-standard DN-2000F. Comprised of a dual rackmount CD player and RC-35 remote rackmount control unit, the newer model offers an improved chassis construction, expanded control features and a new laser pickup.

Denon Electronics, a division of Denon Corporation (USA), is a leading manufacturer of electronics for professional audio, broadcast, multimedia and consumer audio markets with headquarters in Parsippany, N.J.

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MTX Introduces Full-Range Power "T" Series Loudspeakers

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P15T	15" Full-range	36Hz-30kHz	8ohm	1.8kHz	92db	150/600	120db	$319.95

MTX introduces two new models to the MTX Power Loudspeaker Line. The "T" Series is built for the ever increasing demand for a high performance professional audio loudspeaker at a working performer's price. MTX has added superior performance and a very cosmetically appealing design to the new Power "T" Series. Both models are full-range designs and consist of the P12T, a single 12" and horn and the P15T, a single 15" and horn. Each model features a 2" x 6" high frequency horn with a full 90 degrees of horizontal coverage and a very low crossover point of 1.8kHz. This horn accurately reproduces midrange frequencies for improved off-axis intelligibility, and provides a smooth transition between high and low frequencies. The incredibly low deep bass response was engineered by MTX to provide a smooth but yet very natural low frequency reproduction. Incorporated into the low frequency drivers are 2" and 2 1/2" high temperature Black Kapton voice coils with an oversized strontium ferrite motor structure to increase thermal handling protection and insure dependability. The 10 degree trapezoidal cabinet is constructed of 3/4" O.S.B. with "dado" interlocking construction covered with black aviation grade carpet. Interlocking protective corners and a unique sleek pressure-tension mounted one piece 19 gauge steel grill not only look great but insure durability. MTX added multiple inputs, 1/4" and 5-way binding posts for every possible input configuration. MTX backs all Power Loudspeakers with a 5 year warranty. For more information contact MTX at (602) 438-4545 or Fax: (602) 438-8692.

By Robert A. Lindquist

Karaoke Carousel

PANASONIC'S SL-VM525 VIDEO CD CHANGER CAN DO THE SHOW

We're always a bit skeptical when asked to review consumer line (i.e. "home type") equipment. Unfortunately, when it comes to karaoke gear, there is no distinction between consumer line and pro line. Most of the karaoke players we've run over the test bench in the past have been, with the exception of lacking a rackmountable face, quite professional and roadworthy. The new SL-VM525 from Panasonic is no exception.

While the plastic faceplate looks and feels very consumer line, the metal case gives it a sturdy, well-constructed feel, while keeping the weight at just 11 pounds. Prior to setting up the unit for this test, we dropped it several times at various angles from a distance from the ground of about 10 inches. While this is something the manufacturer would prefer we didn't do, it's the only way to certify that the unit is up to at least light mobile use. This is not to suggest that our readers misuse their gear, but stuff happens.

THE DO'S AND DON'TS

First off, it's important to note that this is not a dedicated CD/CD+G player. It's a multi-format machine that plays 5": audio CDs, CDRs, karaoke CD+Gs, and several types of full motion video discs. So along with handling your typical Sound Choice or Music Maestro lyric-over-colored-screen CDs, it will also play a full length CD-I movie (it will not play DVDs) and NVS-type CD videos.

For KJs, all features except CD-I are useful. As a house machine for a bar or pub, the CD-I feature may prove handy. That's assuming that CD-I maintains any market strength (it's pretty weak now) once DVD gains a stranglehold on the prerecorded movie market. With DVD getting a big push in time for the holidays, that may already be the case by the time you read this review.

SO MUCH FOR MOVIES

Interestingly, all of the DVD players we have seen so far will not play a CD+G (there may be some, we just haven't seen it). One of the big advantages to DVD and video CD is the ability to place full motion video behind the lyrics, like the big 12" laser discs. Assuming you have a video screen set up for the audience, this gives them something more to look at than just words on a background.

How is this player for doing karaoke? Ultimately, using two CD+G machines is the best way to do a karaoke show. It allows you to cue the next selection while a singer is in the spotlight. And having a backup player is just good common sense. I am reminded of a karaoke show I attended last spring in Myrtle Beach, S.C. Right at the height of the show, the KJ's JVC player jammed. All momentum was lost as the KJ stopped the show for almost 45 minutes to fix the machine. He did not even have a CD player to fill the gap.

Aside from the fact that it's a good idea to have a backup deck, using this Panasonic player is very much like using a dual deck. The carousel will hold five discs but, unless you really have the brain for it, I wouldn't recommend loading in more than three at time. Once the drawer shuts, it can be hard to remember what disc is in what slot. I found the best way to use the machine was to load a disc, select

PANASONIC SL-VM525 VIDEO CD CHANGER

No. of channels	2 stereo
Frequency response	20-20,000Hz ± 1dB
Dynamic range	92 dB
S/N	100 dB
Dimensions (WxHxD)	16-15/16"x 4-15/16" x15-11/16"
Weight	10.4 lbs.

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SS 4x8x4

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and start the track, open the drawer and insert the next disc. That's right, you can open the drawer while the disc is playing! Once you start the second disc, switch the first and repeat the process.

ERROR-FREE OPERATION

Disc selection is simplified by a row of five two-color LED disc indicators. The LEDs glow amber for loaded discs, green for the disc that's playing. Tracks can be selected either by using the stepper controls or directly with direct access buttons. All selections can also be made by way of the supplied 38-key wireless remote. Disc rotation and track cueing times are excellent. Program the disc and track and it'll be ready to go well before the singer gets to the microphone.

Additional features include two microphone inputs with independent volume controls, three-step digital echo, seven-step digital pitch control, key control, and multiplex playing. One feature that is lacking from this and the majority of karaoke players is mic equalization. While not critical for home use, professionals really need to be able to tweak the sound of their mics separate from their system. Not to mention, carrying separate equalizers for their mics is rather cumbersome. A simple tone control would add greatly to this unit's professional qualities.

"Using this Panasonic player is very much like using a dual deck. The carousel will hold five discs but, unless you really have the brain for it, I wouldn't recommend loading in more than three at time."

On the job, I found the Panasonic SL-VM525 very easy to use. It responds quickly to commands and, with a S/N ratio of 100dB, has terrific sound. Packaged with each unit is an extensive software library including nine CD+Gs from Sound Choice, Music Maestro, DKKaraoke and RCA. There is also a UBest karaoke video CD, an NVS-TV 18 sound video disc and, for after the gig, the Phillips TV movie: "Four Weddings and Funeral." With an MSRP of $599 (if sold separately: $499 for machine and $249 for software) for the player and the software, it's quite a bargain. Whether you are a full-time KJ, or a DJ who does the occasional karaoke booking, this is certainly one of the best buys available at this time.

For more information on the Panasonic SL-VM525, contact Karaoke Warehouse at 800-645-8401.

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CRANK UP THE VOLUME

Watt's up with power amps is the focus of this DJ Shopper. Who's got the juice, who's got the staying power and who's lost weight. It's all here and it's all designed to help you keep your speaker investment from going up in smoke.

BY HENRY COLLINS

Your hands are clammy, your mouth is dry and your pulse is racing. Early symptoms of a heart attack? No, it's APS (amplifier purchase syndrome). It's that uneasy feeling you get when making a major amplifier purchase. Well, to help ease the heart-wrenching pressure of a new amplifier purchase, we will take a look at power amplifiers and discuss what factors you need to keep an eye on before reaching into your wallet.

OUTPUT POWER—HOW MUCH IS ENOUGH?

The first step in selecting an amplifier should begin with your speakers. A speaker's power handling and maximum SPL (sound pressure level) will help you determine how much amplifier muscle you really need. A basic rule of thumb is: double the speaker's continuous power handling to get the amplifier's maximum output power. A speaker, for example, with 150 watts of continuous power handling at 8 ohms could be safely paired up with a 300-watt amplifier.

MAXIMUM SPL

A speaker's maximum SPL spec is also a useful guide in determining the recommended power output of a power amplifier. This approach requires an understanding of decibels and logarithms beyond the scope and patience of most equipment buyers. Simply stated, to increase a speaker's loudness by 3dB, you have to double the amplifier's output power. For example, if a speaker can deliver an SPL of 98dB with 1 watt of power, you would need 2 watts to produce an SPL of 101dB. If this same speaker had a maximum SPL of 124dB (a typical listening level for a near-deaf rock concert experience), the amplifier's power output requirement would jump to 512 watts. Let's say this same speaker could produce an SPL of 101dB with just 1 watt, it would only need 256 watts of power to produce the same 124dB listening level. So by using more efficient speakers in your sound system, you can achieve concert listening level with less amplifier power.

THERMAL PROTECTION

Power amplifiers generate a lot of heat, especially when operating at high output levels. To help vent this heat and prevent thermal damage, most professional quality amplifiers feature forced air cooling fans. If you are purchasing a power amplifier with over 100 watts of output power, make sure its thermal protection includes cooling fans. When

Audiotek ATK Series Amplifiers

A relative newcomer to the DJ market, Audiotek's ATK series offers rugged design and bulletproof performance (see ATK-800 review in the Sept. '97 issue). We torture-tested the ATK-800 and it stood up well to the abuse. Dual multispeed fans, comprehensive protection circuitry and a massive toroidal transformer are just a few of the performance features found on this impressive line of power amplifiers from Audiotek. Three year warranty.

BST JMC Series Amplifiers

BST's 2 ohm stable JMC 1200, JMC 1600, and JMC 2000 are ideal for powering bass cabinets. They feature an onboard low-pass crossover with four selectable frequencies. A 15Hz subsonic filter keeps inaudible low frequencies from hammering your drivers. The amplifiers come equipped with full thermal, short circuit and surge protection, as well as power up and power down transient muting. Dual fans with automatic speed adjustment are among the other quality features offered on BST's top-of-the-line JMC series amplifiers. Three year warranty.

operating your amplifier, it is also important to make certain it has plenty of ventilation and the vent filters or grills are cleaned regularly to ensure sufficient air flow.

SPEAKER PROTECTION

Another important feature to look for when purchasing an amplifier is speaker protection. One of the most important of these is DC (direct current) protection. When an amplifier is driven into hard clipping for an extended period of time, it can pass unwanted direct current to the speakers and arc weld the voice coils to the magnet assembly. Most professional power amplifiers feature some form of DC protection or clip limiting to help prevent speaker damage. Before buying any power amplifier, make certain it features, at the very least, DC protection circuitry, as this is a reliable indicator of good amplifier design.

Turn-on and turn-off transient protection is another speaker-saving feature you should check for when buying an amplifier. Look for amplifiers with some form of turn-on/turn-off muting or delay circuitry that quiets power-up transients before they find their way to your delicate high-frequency driver components. A good transient-stopper safety tip: remember to power your amplifiers last when firing up your sound system and power them down first when shutting down your equipment.

HUMMMMMM!

There's nothing more annoying than an amplifier that doesn't know how to

Crest CA Series Amplifiers

A popular name on the touring circuit, Crest's CA series power amplifiers are best known for their clean, consistent power in a compact, road-worthy package that won't break the bank. Advanced technology and extensive TourClass™ protection circuitry allow these amplifiers to operate with greater efficiency in difficult load and power conditions. The CA's clip limiting circuit protects drivers and ensures sonic integrity even in extreme overload conditions. All this performance and reliability is backed by a five year warranty.

Crown K2 Amplifier

Crown has long enjoyed a reputation as a premiere amplifier manufacturer. In keeping with this tradition is Crown's revolutionary K2 amplifier. The K2 is the world's first amplifier to utilize Crown's proprietary Balanced Current Amplifier (BCA) circuitry to deliver exceptionally high power while generating no component-degrading heat, plus it consumes less energy than competitive amplifiers. This might well explain why this 475-watt (at 8 ohms) amplifier features no cooling fans!

EV Precision Series Amplifiers

Electro-Voice Precision Series™ amplifiers deliver state-of-the-art performance and bulletproof reliability. With four models in the line delivering 350 to 750 watts per channel (at 8 ohms), Precision Series amplifiers incorporate the best in powered amplifier design to deliver superb performance and exceptional value. Precision engineering and manufacturing have never been available at more attractive prices.

Numark Performance Series Amplifiers

Numark has stepped up to the plate again with an all new line of power amplifiers. As the name implies, the Performance Series is a high-performance line of power amplifiers designed to stand up to the demanding rigors of mobile sound applications. Numark offers two models with 2-ohm stable output: the SA3000 delivers 150 watts at 8 ohms and the SA5500 is rated at 270 watts. Both amplifiers offer fan-cooled and bridged-mono operation.

Pioneer MV Series Amplifiers

Yes, Pioneer also makes a line of professional power amplifiers. The success of their mixer and CD player line has directed attention away from their amplifiers, which by the way, are equally impressive. The line consists of two models: the M-V2000 which delivers 220 watts into 8 ohms and the M-V3000, which kicks out 300 watts with an 8-ohm load. Both models offer comprehensive speaker and output protection along with beefy construction.

QSC Powerlight Series Amplifiers

For years now, QSC has been battling the mistaken belief that a lightweight amplifier doesn't have the guts needed to belt out chest-pounding bass. With QSC's tour-proven line of Powerlight amplifiers, even die-hard muscle transformer amp junkies are giving the Powerlight line a second look. Rock-steady performance, solid construction and competitive pricing are just a few of Powerlight's main selling features.

keep quiet. All amplifiers generate some measurable amounts of internal noise. The design of a good amplifier will keep these noise components well below the program signal. An amplifier's ability to hush up is called signal-to-noise ratio. If you are mixing CDs or any digital sound source, you will want to look for a very quiet amplifier since digital audio media have far less background noise than vinyl and audio tape. Look for amplifiers with a signal-to-noise or hum and noise spec of 90dB or greater. Since high signal-to-noise specs are indicative of good amplifier design, stay far away from amplifiers with poor or over-inflated noise specifications.

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Soundtech PS Series Amplifier

At 15 pounds, 8 ounces, Soundtech's PS800 is the heavyweight champ of lightweight touring amplifiers. This compact, single rack space amplifier delivers 230 watts at 8 ohms and 800 watts in mono bridge mode. Best of all, the PS800 has a finance-friendly sticker price of $699.

DON'T LET 'EM SEE YA SWEAT

A seasoned pro audio salesperson is like a hungry shark. They can smell their next meal from miles away. So when you step into their swimming area, make sure you have your stroke under control. Remember, never lose sight of the importance of this purchase. Pretty LEDs and an attractive paint job are meaningless when your amplifier suffers a heat stroke and the bride and groom stand looking at you for an explanation.

Check specs, check performance and check price before you dive in. If a deal on an amplifier sounds too good to be true... it probably is. Whenever possible, ask the salesperson if you can see the owner's manual of the amplifier you plan to buy. If it is poorly written and has incomplete specifications, drop it like a bad habit. You'll be doing you and your wallet a big favor.

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Amplifier Electronics 101

The basic job of an amplifier is to increase an audio signal's amplitude. It must be able to do this while accurately reproducing the original audio signal without distortion. In more simplistic terms, an amplifier is a straight wire with gain.

While the mission of an amplifier is simple, the technology required to accomplish this feat isn't. An audio signal is composed of alternating sine waves with positive and negative components. How these wave components are handled by the amplifier is largely determined by its circuit design or classification.

CLASS DISTINCTION

In a simple Class A amplifier design, a single transistor circuit amplifies both the positive and negative sides of the wave. The primary advantage of a Class A design is accurate sound reproduction with ultra low distortion. The disadvantage is that it is at most 50 percent efficient, which means it consumes a lot of wasted power and generates a lot of unwanted heat.

One variation on the Class A design is the Class B amplifier, which is actually two amplifier circuits (two transistors) tied together. One amp amplifies the positive side of the wave, while the other one amplifies the negative side. The outputs of these two amps are then tied together to make the single waveform. The primary advantage of the Class B approach is greater efficiency. The disadvantage is that there is some distortion of the wave when they are merged together.

The Class AB amplifier is similar to a class B amplifier in that two amplifier circuits are used. The difference is that the positive amplifier actually goes partially negative, while the negative amplifier goes partially positive. In short, the AB amplifier is basically a compromise between a Class A amplifier and a Class B amplifier. It is more efficient than a Class A, but less than a Class B. And while the distortion is less than a Class B, it's more than a Class A.

Class distinction alone does not make a great power amplifier. Some of today's popular AB amplifiers easily rival the distortion specs of some earlier Class A designs. In fact, recent advances in power supply and digital switching technology have given birth to a whole alphabet of new amplifier classes. Today you'll find Class D, Class G and Class H power amplifiers, in addition to the more popular Class AB design. Some of these newer designs, such as QSC's Class H amplifiers, offer greater output efficiency and improved thermal characteristics.

Pushing the amplifier class struggle still further is Crown's revolutionary K2 series amplifier. This controversial amplifier design evolves around Crown's patent-pending BCA (balanced current amplifier) output stage. This "classless" amplifier design generates one-tenth the heat of conventional amplifiers and is over three times more thermally-efficient than any other amp on the market. In fact, the 475 watt-per-channel K2 is convection cooled (no cooling fan). This is something for any amplifier, especially one with a sealed chassis.

So instead of worrying about which is the best class of amplifier to buy, check the specs, check the price, and stay tuned to *Mobile Beat*. Class dismissed.

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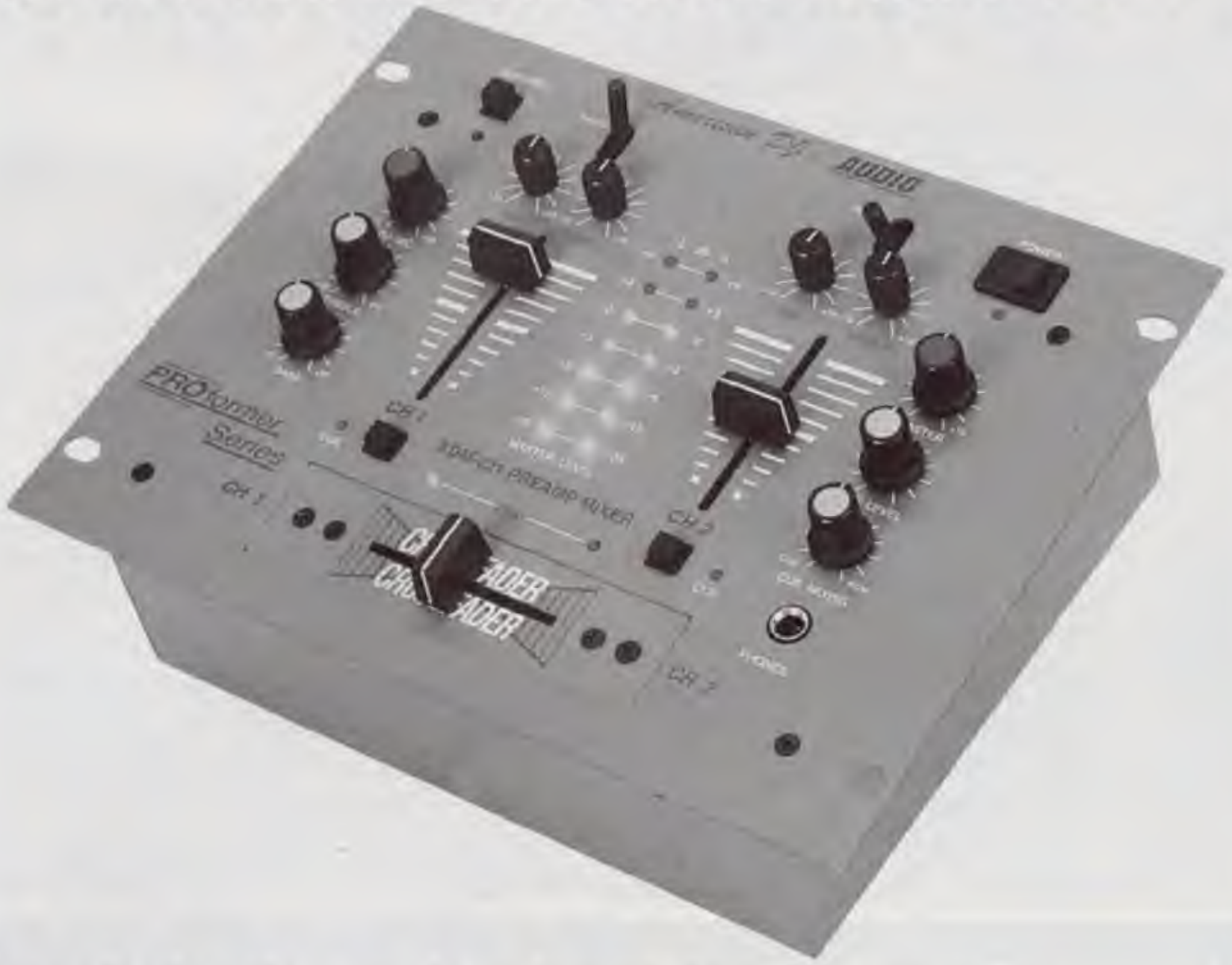
AMERICAN DJ XDM-221



Introducing the new benchmark in price versus performance...The XDM-221 from American DJ.

BY HENRY COLLINS/B.J. MORRIS

Anyone who is currently DJing can remember when finances were not quite as ambitious as we were. Had American DJ released the XDM-221 then, it would have not been a problem. The compact XDM-221 boasts and, as we discovered, delivers high-end features and performance at a reasonable price!

CHECK THIS OUT!

At first glance, the "primer" gray XDM-221 does look a little bit bland. After a short time, however, we acquired a taste for its simple styling. Contrasted white silk-screening and colored knobs made at-a-glance adjustments a piece of cake. The compact, all-metal chassis proves to be an excellent fit between our two turntables. We had no problem getting around on the accessible XDM-221. The placement of the various knobs, faders, and buttons obviously had heavy input from DJs. The mixer's two phono, two line, master output, and record output RCA connections stood firm through many setup changes. The back panel also sports a 1/4-inch microphone input, beefy ground post, user-replaceable .5 amp fuse, and 115/230 volt current selector.

DEFY THE NORM!

With many budget-minded mixers, money-saving shortcuts taken in construction and quality can be quite compromising. Therefore, we had our doubts of this unit's quality... until we tried it. American DJ obviously had to shave some corners to make the XDM-221 affordable, but we can't find them! All of the top panel controls are superbly mounted and deliver a very solid feel. Even the transformers came through our testing unscathed. Our only minuscule complaint is the somewhat flimsy channel faders. They are stronger than expected, but are out of place among the other "workhorse" controls.

LET'S TAKE A LOOK

Defying its price point once again, the XDM-221 comes loaded with features. Both phono/line channels have treble and bass EQ controls with 10dB of attenuation. The dedicated DJ mic channel features output level control, and a push-button talk-over selector that automatically reduces the output level of both phono/line channels when pressed. Treble and bass EQ controls make annoying mic feedback a thing of the past. The mixer's dual textured transformer toggle switches are extra long to prevent an embarrassing slip. A center-mounted, seven-segment LED meter makes level monitoring easy in the darkest conditions. American DJ's unique "Feather Fader" is definitely one of our favorite features. The "Feather Fader" delivers smooth, fast, and uncom-

Test Bench

The following components were used in the product evaluation.

Rack: CSL SuperTable
Odyssey CMC 11-14

Turntables: Vestax PDX-d3

Cartridges: Shure SC-35C

Equalizer: BST Process 10

Amplifier: Crest CA18

Speakers: Sonic DJX1812

American DJ XDM-221
Suggested List: $179.00

American DJ
4295 Charter Street
Los Angeles, CA 90058
Tel: 213-582-2650
Fax: 213-582-2610

monly solid operation on every mix. The crossfader curve is "quick-in," making it ideal for scratch-mixing. Last, but definitely not least, the XDM-221 offers "must-have" cue mixing. Combined with a push-button channel selector and rotary cue level control, the cue mix knob allows you to preview your mix, for a mistake-free performance.

A HELPING HAND.

Perhaps the XDM-221's best feature are the dual LED "beat" indicators, a definite plus for beginning DJs. In our testing, the indicators usually lit with kick drum or bass tones, and were almost always on matching beats. If you have beat-matching mastered, you may not think this is an important feature. However, anyone who has ever played in a setting where you could barely hear what you were playing can attest to the fact that a visual aid can definitely come in handy.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER.

The XDM-221 from American DJ has changed our impression of what a finance-friendly mixer must offer. It consistently performed beyond our expectations, and decisively proved its worth as the mixer of choice when price and performance are important to you.

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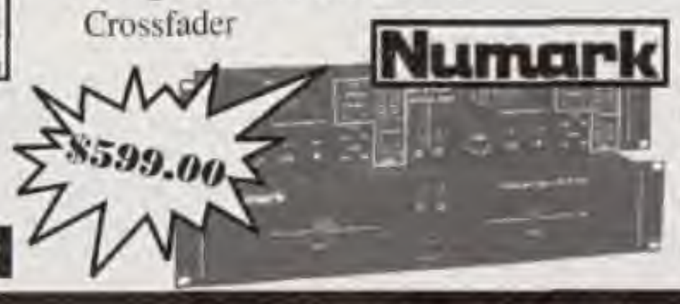

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BY HENRY COLLINS/B.J. MORRIS

KAM GMX-ONE

In a market dominated by gadgets and gizmos, it's nice to know that someone still has their ear to the end user. The new GMX-ONE mixer is the latest impressive result of KAM's attentiveness.

There have always been a few forward-thinking companies who realize the importance of listening to the end user, and heavily utilize factors such as feel in their product designs. These companies have made the simple, user friendly, yet cutting edge products that continue to shape the way we make music. At the forefront of this trend towards solid, functional simplicity is KAM. Among the various mixers from KAM that reflect this approach, we chose to review the GMX-ONE. Designed to meet the needs and withstand the rigors of vinyl scratch-mixing, this progressive masterpiece has the makings of greatness.

LOOKING GOOD!

We were impressed with the GMX-ONE from the minute we opened the box. The stylish, brushed aluminum top-panel styling brought a smile to our faces. Because, let's face it, nobody wants to show up with a mixer that looks like another sweatshop OEM surprise. The attractive finish is complemented by minimal silk-screening, and clean-cut, out-of-your-way ergonomics. Recessed top-panel hardware keeps you from getting tangled up during ultra-fast mixes. The back panel features well-anchored RCA connections for the mixer's three phono and two line inputs, as well as booth and master outputs. Also provided are a 1/4-inch phone jack for connecting an external microphone, and a connection for the removable, external transformer power supply.

BOMB PROOF

Construction is one of the most important aspects of a mixer. Poor construction can lead to a weak feel, short life, constant crossfader replacement syndrome, and failure during a performance. Beefy construction is even more important in a mixer designed for abusive professional vinyl mixing, like the GMX-ONE. Keeping this in mind, we used and abused the GMX-ONE off and on for three weeks like it was DMC finals, and guess what broke.

Nothing! The mixer came out of the tests scowling and ready for more. The transformers, rotary pots, and faders held up beautifully!

A LITTLE GOES A LONG WAY

Although the KAM GMX-ONE features fewer bells and whistles than its competition, it packs on the pounds where it counts! Each of the three channels feature treble, midrange, and bass EQ controls with 12 dB of attenuation, and an input gain trim control with 10dB of attenuation. Keeping scratch mix DJs in mind, KAM provides solid, textured transformers for slip-free, fast cuts. We were surprised to find that even after weeks of throwing the transformers back and forth, they still operated without any of the "clicking" signal noise found in many mixers. Those of you who are missing half of the knobs off of your mixer will be happy to know that all of the knobs are securely fastened to the pots! They are so secure, that attempting to remove

Test Bench

The following components were used in the product evaluation.

Rack: CSL SuperTable Odyssey CMC 11-14
Turntables: Gemini PT-2000
Cartridges: Shure SC-35C
Equalizer: BST Process 10
Amplifier: Crown K2
Speakers: Gem Sound 215T

KAM GMX-ONE
Suggested List: $569.00
Pro Mix Distributors
3044 Center Lane
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33308
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one for inspection took several minutes to accomplish. The GMX-ONE features a comprehensive cue section. A toggle-switch selector makes cueing between channels quick and guess free. For headphone monitoring between the selected channel and the program output, a cue mix knob lets you pan between both sources eliminating the one headphone up, one headphone down cueing.

SMOOTH AS A BABY'S...

Perhaps the most innovative, exciting feature found on the GMX-ONE is its state-of-the-art VCA crossfader. Found on expensive, professional installation mixers, the super-smooth VCA (voltage control amplifier) crossfader never comes into contact with the analog audio signal. Instead, it regulates voltage flow to a separate digital device, which in turn regulates the audio signal. In other words, this means less noise, longer crossfader life, and no more dirty pot problems. This technology also creates a curve that is consistent across the entire crossfader throw. Regardless of your style of mixing, we promise you'll fall in love with this crossfader.

TO SUM IT UP

After our first 5 minutes of playing with the GMX-ONE, we had formed a preliminary conclusion... this mixer is a lot of fun! After a few weeks of playing with it, our conclusion was still the same. This is one of the most well-rounded, innovative, attractive, hard-working mixers to come across our bench in a long time. Not just because of what it has, but also because of what it doesn't have... a front panel full of gadget clutter.

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By Henry Collins/B.J. Morris

BST ACTIV 25

The "sport-utility" of mixers is poised to take you to the limit and beyond. The Activ 25 from BST delivers enough versatility to make the most challenging Mobile DJ gigs a walk in the park.

Test Bench

The following components were used in the product evaluation.

Rack: CSL Supertable

CD Player: Pioneer CDJ-500II

Turntables: BST PR-136

Cartridges: Shure SC-35C

Equalizer: BST Process 10

Amplifier: QSC PL 1.0, PL 4.0

Speakers: Pioneer S-V7000, S-V5500W

BST Activ 25
Suggested List: $386.90.

BST
1220 Champion Circle
Carrollton, TX 75006
Tel: 888-BST-0014
Fax: 888-FAX-BST9

As you will all agree, being a Mobile DJ is very enjoyable and rewarding. We have the unique opportunity to make someone's special event memorable. The only bad thing is that every unpredictable event poses new setup and performance obstacles, as well as equipment demands. How many times have you shown up at a gig with your bright and shiny new mixer only to discover that the client has changed their mind about this or that, and your new "wonder mixer" won't fit the bill? Ever-changing conditions demand a mixer designed with the utmost in performance, features and durability in mind. BST has heard our pleas and delivered with the feature-packed, extremely versatile Activ 25.

ONE FOR THE ROAD

For quite some time, we have been watching for a mixer to come along that would adequately fulfill the needs of any Mobile DJ. Needless to say, when the Activ 25 came across our bench, we exchanged sighs of relief. Over the course of our testing, we took the Activ 25 on the road to several different venues, each demanding a very different mixer. Each time, under various setup and performance conditions, the mixer performed nicely. Housed in a rugged 19-inch, rackmountable chassis, the mixer's wealth of pushbuttons, knobs, and faders are laid out to be very accessible, and easily identifiable.

IN AND OUT

A major aspect of the Activ 25's versatility is its seemingly endless supply of inputs and outputs. One top panel mounted XLR DJ mic inputs, plus three back panel mounted 1/4-inch mic input, make karaoke applications a snap. Four stereo line inputs, one mono line input, two phono inputs, and a stereo "Bus" submixer input enable you to utilize virtually any input configuration. Along with a record output, independently adjustable X and Y outputs are designed for running dual "zones" or, as we discovered, bi-amplified setups. In our testing, we ran the X output to our full-range amp, and the Y channel to our bass amp. This setup allowed us to maintain precise control of the sound, as well as solo the bass cabinets for easy EQ adjustments.

TWEAK & PEAK

Another aspect of the Activ 25 that impressed us was the amount of control offered on each channel. Each of the four main channels, as well as the DJ mic and auxiliary mic/line insert, feature a slider controlled, three-band EQ with 12dB of cut and boost. In case you didn't catch that, each of the Activ 25's four mic inputs has its own three-band EQ. This rare feature means an end to annoying mic feedback. Each of the four main channels also feature an input selector, as well as individual gain control for each input source. For those of you with remote-start compatible CDPs or turntables, BST included push-button,

contact-closure remote starts on each channel.

As if all of that weren't enough, the Activ 25 boasts an impressive list of performance features as well. The mixer's assignable, replaceable crossfader has a smooth, yet firm feel and an unusually short travel of one inch. This facilitates fast mixing, but does not offer the manipulation of a longer-throw crossfader. Crossfader throw is based almost solely on personal preference, thus experimentation is the only way to determine if this is a pro or con for you. Located on each side of the crossfader are "punch" push-buttons. These essentially act as insert buttons and allow the user to overlay the assigned channel to the channel that is currently playing. This is a nice feature, as it allows you to insert scratch effect or sound bytes without the lag time or volume drop of moving the crossfader. For level monitoring, the Activ 25 features illuminated, stereo VU meters with push-button X or Y output selectors. While it does not feature the essential cue mix function, the Activ 25's cue section is nicely designed. Each channel features a push-button PFL switch for easy channel selection. The long-throw cue level fader gives as much volume as we could stand, even during high-level mixing, and is accompanied by a PFL/master toggle switch.

NEEDS SOME ATTENTION

We would not be completely accurate if we told you the Activ 25 is perfect. The first problem that came to our attention was the input selector design. Having toggle switches that are solid and easy to hold is essential to any DJ's book of tricks. While the switches are, in fact, solid, they extend only a quarter inch above the front panel, rendering them virtually useless for vigorous transformer effects.

We should also address the push-button talk-over feature on the DJ mic channel. Its preset sensitivity is so severe that the slightest noise transmitted through the microphone triggers the program drop, creating up and down signal output. It is our suggestion that you bypass this feature and reduce the music level manually.

The last "blooper" found on the Activ 25 is the not-previously-mentioned Sound Boost. This oversized push-button effect gives an instant 3dB boost to the output signal. We found that this effect, especially when implemented at already high output levels, can causes potentially damaging, clipping distortion. Unless you have a perverted passion for reconing speaker drivers, we heartily discourage its use.

IN A FEW WORDS

These few problems, you must remember, are minuscule when compared to the overwhelming list of positive, performance-enhancing features found on the super-versatile Activ 25 from BST. We do not hesitate to recommend this mixer to any Mobile DJ who demands the most from his or her equipment.

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One Hot Mini!

Designed to meet the needs of performance and production DJs, the rugged, user-friendly DN-M2000R minidisc player/recorder from Denon comes packed with many of the same features found on Denon's industry-standard DN-2000F MKII CD player. Five front-panel Hot Start buttons deliver instant playback of sound effects or track locations. A large jog dial and shuttle wheel make track searching quick and accurate. Upon track selection, the advanced auto cue function sets the track start at the point where audio signal begins. Track/disc name and track divide/combine are among the many editing possibilities available in record mode. Three-setting finish mode, ± 4 or 8 percent pitch adjustment, and push-button seamless looping are among the many other performance features that are sure to make the DN-M2000R the most valuable piece of gear in your rack. Suggested list: $1,250

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222 New Road • Parsippany, NJ 07054
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Roland Does It Again!

The Boss SP-202 Dr. Sample, from Roland Corp., is designed for budget-minded mobile, performance, and production DJs who demand professional results. The tabletop SP-202 delivers up to 260 seconds of internal storage at four selectable sampling rates, and multiple built-in effects. Up to 35 minutes of samples can be loaded and played in real-time via Roland's revolutionary two and four megabyte SmartMedia cards. Built-in, pro-quality effects such as Pitch Adjust, Filters 1 and 2, Time Stretch, Delay, and Ring Modulation make tweaking samples or vocals via the SP-202's mic input a piece of cake. Other performance features include MIDI input for external sample triggering, and battery powered operation for out-and-about sampling. Sample the world with the essential Boss SP-202 Dr. Sample from Roland. Suggested List: $395

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Mix It Up!

Made for the serious Mobile DJ, the four-channel HIFE 401 delivers a variety of features, along with the smooth ergonomics necessary to make vinyl and CD mixing a breeze. For CD-mix DJs, remote start controls on each channel provide push-button remote operation of compatible CD players. For vinyl lovers, the HIFE 401's narrow chassis is the same height as BST's PR-136 and the Technics SL-1200 MKII, making it ideal for fast-paced, free-style mixing. LED push-button cue switches make source monitoring easy and guess-free, even in the darkest rooms. Fast-action, one-inch ALPS crossfader, along with individual gain, balance, and three-band EQ controls for each channel make the HIFE 401 from BST your number one mixing workstation. Suggested list: $438

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Boasting more useful features, current output, and reliability than ever offered before, Mackie Design's innovative Fast Recovery (FR) series premium power amplifiers are sure to be a leading contender in the ever-changing amplifier marketplace. Fast Recovery technology utilizes low negative feedback and high-speed digital circuitry to allow the FR series to operate at peak performance even when driven past their normal limits into loads as low as 2 ohms. Sweepable constant-directivity horn compensation, sweepable high-pass filter, switchable low-pass crossover, and sub-sonic stabilized all come built-in, eliminating the need for costly add-on modules. Constant-gradient T-designed cooling assures that the FRs will keep their cool. Delivering up to 1260 watts at 4 ohms bridged, and equipped with rugged Neutrik Speakon connectors, the FR series amplifiers from Mackie Designs are ideal for Mobile DJs as well as touring, reinforcement, permanent installation, recording, and broadcasting. Suggested list: $699-$799

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Create Funky Tracks... On Your PC!

Mixman Technologies, known for its interactive music software, introduces Mixman Studio, a new CD-ROM that turns your computer into an easy-to-use and fun-to-play desktop music system. Mixman Studio replaces expensive, intimidating professional audio gear with a consumer-friendly interface that enables beginning and seasoned musicians to create professional sounding music. The innovative virtual turntable interface allows easy loading of up to 16 musical elements at a time. Mixman Studio comes equipped with an extensive library of grooves and samples from styles that I can truly say sound great, such as: hip-hop, jungle, house, acid jazz, Latin jazz, reggae, funk, world beat, ethnic, and ambient. Auto-match technology delivers effortless loop synching, and flawless beat-matching every time. The studio section of Mixman Studio allows you to record any given sample as a WAV file and add it to the mix. Real-time control over tempo, volume, pitch, and panning, combined with the so-fun-it's-addictive interface, and an unbelievably low price, makes Mixman Studio a must have! Suggested list: $49.95

Mixman Technologies
850 Montgomery Street, Suite 350
San Francisco, CA 94133
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Web site: www.mixman.com

Dynamic Dual!

Ideal for Mobile DJs, restaurants and bars, the clean cut DN-T620 from Denon combines a CD player and cassette player/recorder in a 3U, rack-mountable chassis. When used with a mixer, programmed music from the CD player can be mixed with vocals from an outboard microphone and recorded to the cassette deck, making prerecorded announcements simple to create. The DN-T620's professional quality CD player features single or continuous playback, A-B repeat mode, and gutsy, hologram laser pickup. The studio quality tape deck comes loaded with Dolby B noise reduction, return-to-zero memory rewind, Full Logic mechanism, adjustable input level, and switchable CD or external line record inputs. Variable pitch adjustment of ± 12 percent, adjustable, assignable headphone output, and balanced XLR inputs and outputs make the DN-T620 truly dynamic. Suggested List: $750

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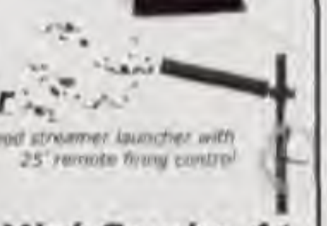

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Present, Past & Future

The 1997 hits leave their presence upon us, while 1998 soon-to-be hits make an impression.

It's time again to look back at the hottest and best selling CD compilations of 1997. I, however, don't believe in dwelling in the past, so we'll also take a look forward at some new releases that are sure to make next year's list of the best from 1998.

BY FRED SEBASTIAN

"90's STYLE"

Varied and extensive, this is a great collection of 90's hits (two CDs) (As Seen On TV).

Here Comes The Hotstepper	INI KAMOZE
My Lovin' (You're Never Gonna Get It)	EN VOGUE
What Is Love	HADDAWAY
It Ain't Over 'Til It's Over	LENNY KRAVITZ
No Rain	BLIND MELON
I Can See Clearly Now	JIMMY CLIFF
Groove Is In The Heart	DEEE-LITE
Epic	FAITH NO MORE
2 Legit 2 Quit	HAMMER
Hip Hop Hooray	NAUGHTY BY NATURE
Something Got Me Started	SIMPLY RED
I Kissed A Girl	JILL SOBULE
I Like The Way (The Kissing Game)	HI-FIVE
Rebirth Of Slick (Cool Like Dat)	DIGABLE PLANETS
Black Velvet	ALANNAH MYLES
If I Ever Fall In Love	SHAI
Bad Reputation	FREEDY JOHNSTON
Three Little Pigs	GREEN JELLY
Fantastic Voyage	COOLIO
Informer	SNOW
Let's Talk About Sex	SALT -N- PEPA
Baby I Love Your Way	BIG MOUNTAIN
Set Adrift On Memory Bliss	P.M. DAWN
Tom's Diner	DNA w/ SUZANNE VEGA
Wind Of Change	THE SCORPIONS
Superwoman	KARYN WHITE
I Wanna Sex You Up	COLOR ME BADD
Freak Like Me	ADINA HOWARD
I Remember You	SKID ROW
Sick Of Myself	MATTHEW SWEET
All Around The World	LISA STANSFIELD
Lucas With The Lid Off	LUCAS
Sukiyaki	4 PM
What's Up	4 NON BLONDES
Show Me Love	ROBIN S
Whoomp! (There It Is)	TAG TEAM

"BEST JAZZ ALBUM... EVER!"

This set is for jazz lovers, dinner parties, cocktails, and more. From classics to smooth jazz, a bit of everything is found in this collection (three CDs).

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I Get A Kick Out Of You	ELLA FITZGERALD
Mad About The Boy	DINAH WASHINGTON
Fever	PEGGY LEE
Cry Me A River	JULIE LONDON
That Ole Devil Called Love	BILLIE HOLIDAY
Take The 'A' Train	DUKE ELLINGTON
Minnie The Moocher	CAB CALLOWAY
Five Guys Named Moe	LOUIS JORDAN
Hello Dolly	LOUIS ARMSTRONG
Ain't Misbehavin'	FATS WALLER
Relax	LEON REDBONE
Summertime	SARAH VAUGHAN
Misty	ERROL GARNER
A Foggy Day	BARNEY KESSEL
Night And Day	DJANGO REINHARDT
Let's Get Lost	CHET BAKER
I Wish I Knew (How It Would Feel To Be Free)	BILLY TAYLOR TRIO
That Kid From Red Bank	COUNT BASIE
Take Five	DAVE BRUBECK
Birdland	WEATHER REPORT
Running Away	RAY AYERS
Watermelon Man	MONGO SANTAMARIA
Moondance	GEORGIE FAME & VAN MORRISON w/ JON HENDRICKS
Do Nothing Till You Hear From Me	MOSE ALLISON
Wade In The Water	RAMSEY LEWIS TRIO
Dropping Bombs On The Whitehouse	STYLE COUNCIL
(Round, Round, Round) Blue Rondo A La Turk	AL JARREAU
So What	RONNY JORDAN
Breezin'	GEORGE BENSON
Morning Dance	SPYRO GYRA
Last Night At Danceland	RANDY CRAWFORD
The Girl From Ipanema	STATE OF THE HEART
Travels	PAT METHENY
So What	MILES DAVIS
Cantaloupe Island	HERBIE HANCOCK
Round Midnight	THELONIUS MONK
Song For My Father	HORACE SILVER
The Sidewinder	LEE MORGAN
Moanin'	ART BLAKEY
Midnight Blue	KENNY BURRELL
Eleanor Rigby	STANLEY JORDAN
Goodbye Pork Pie Hat	CHARLES MINGUS
Ornihology	CHARLIE PARKER
Blue Train	JOHN COLTRANE

"TOE THE LINE 2... THE NEXT STEP"

This is country dance at its best. It features previously unreleased mixes and dance instructions (two CDs).

Honky Tonkin's What I Do Best	MARTY STUART & RANDY TRAVIS
Every Time I Get Around You	DAVID LEE MURPHY
Swing City (Extended Dance)	OGER BROWN & SWING CITY
Wrong Place, Wrong Time	MARK CHESNUTT
Every Cowboy's Dream	RHETT AKINS
Missing You	THE MAVERICKS
An Out Of Control Raging Fire	TRACY BYRD w/ DAWN SEARS
Tangled Up In Texas (Dance Mix)	FRAZIER RIVER
Where The Sidewalk Ends	GEORGE STRAIT
A Little More Love	VINCE GILL
Texas Is Bigger Than It Used To Be	MARK CHESNUTT
Hillbilly Rock	MARTY STUART
Honky Tonk Dancing Machine	TRACY BYRD
Guitar Town	STEVE EARLE
South Side Of Dixie	VINCE GILL
I Brake For Brunettes	RHETT AKINS
Highways And Heartaches	JOE ELY

Walk On	JANEEN WITHERS
Don't Be Cruel (To A Heart That's True)	MARTY STUART
Lovebug	GEORGE STRAIT
Rose Of Memphis	RODNEY CROWELL
Love On The Loose, Heart On The Run	McBRIDE AND THE RIDE
Holdin' Heaven (Club Mix)	TRACY BYRD
One Dance With You	VINCE GILL
Tempted	MARTY STUART
Strut Your Stuff	DAVE SHERIFF
If I Ain't Got You	TRISHA YEARWOOD
Children	THE MAVERICKS
Hard Lovin' Woman	MARK COLLIE
You Better Think Twice	VINCE GILL
Honky Tonk Twist	SCOOTER LEE
What They're Talkin' About	RHETT AKINS
Blame It On Texas	MARK CHESNUTT
Hillbilly Highway	STEVE EARLE
Western Woman	ROGER BROWN & SWING CITY
Big Love (Master Edit)	TRACY BYRD
Rocky Top (Championship Mix)	THE OSBORNE BROTHERS

"LET'S DANCE!"

This CD contains the best original participation dance songs.

Bristol Stomp	THE DOVELLS
The Twist	CHUBBY CHECKER
Twine Time	ALVINE CASH
The Bird's The Word	THE RIVINGTONS
Walking The Dog	RUFUS THOMAS
The Jerk	THE LARKS
Pony Time	CHUBBY CHECKER
Hey Let's Twist	JOEY DEE
Mashed Potato Time	DEE DEE SHARP
Willie And The Hand Jive	JOHNNY OTIS
At The Hop	DANNY & THE JUNIORS
Let's Dance	CHRIS MONTEZ
Do The Funky Chicken	RUFUS THOMAS
Do The Bird	DEE DEE SHARP
Finger Poppin' Time	HANK BALLARD
Peppermint Twist	JOEY DEE
Limbo Rock	CHUBBY CHECKER
The Monkey Time	MAJOR LANCE
Wooly Bully	SAM THE SHAM
(I Do The) Shimmy Shimmy	BOBBY FEEMAN

"ULTIMATE PARTY ANIMAL"

This is the over-all best seller of the year! (three CDs)

Saturday Night	WHIGFIELD
Ooh Aah Just A Little Bit (Motiv8 Radio Edit)	GINA G
Dreamer (Original Club Mix)	LIVIN' JOY
Movin' On Up (M People Master Mix)	M PEOPLE
Things Can Only Get Better (D:Reamix Edit)	D:REAM
We Are Family (Sure Is Pure Remix Edit)	SISTER SLEDGE
Let Me Be Your Fantasy (Radio Edit)	BABY D
Ride On Time	BLACK BOX
Rhythm Of The Night (Rapino Brothers Radio Version)	CORONA
The Power	SNAP
Sunshine After The Rain (Two Cowboys 7" Edit)	BERRI
Twist & Shout	CHAKKA DEMUS & PLIERS
Don't Stop (Wiggle Wiggle) (Townhouse Radio Edit)	OUTHERE BROTHERS
No Limit	2 UNLIMITED
Boom! Shake The Room	JAZZY JEFF & THE FRESH PRINCE
Stayin' Alive (Radio Version)	N-TRANCE
Two Can Play That Game (K-Klassic Mix)	BOBBY BROWN
Killer	ADAMSKI
I Wanna Be A Hippy (Flamman & Abraxas Radio Mix)	TECHNOHEAD
Saturday Night At The Movies	ROBSON & JEROME
Grease Megamix	TRAVOLTA / NEWTON-JOHN
Wake Me Up Before You Go Go	WHAM!
Relight My Fire	TAKE THAT
Locomotion	KYLIE MINOGUE
Never Gonna Give You Up	RICK ASTLEY
I'm Too Sexy	RIGHT SAID FRED
Macarena (Bayside Boys Mix)	LOS DEL RIO
The Time Warp (PWL Extended Remix)	DAMIEN
Swing The Mood: (In The Mood / Rock Around The Clock / Rock-A-Beatin' Boggie / Tutti Frutti / Wake Up Little Suzie / C'mon Everybody / Hound Dog / Shake Rattle & Roll / All Shook Up / Jailhouse Rock / At The Hop)	JIVE BUNNY
Can Can	BAD MANNERS
Anniversary Waltz: (Rock 'n' Roll Music / Lover Please / That'll Be The Day / Singing The Blues / When Will I Be Loved / Let's Work Together / You Keep A Knockin' / Long Tall Sally / Let's Dance / Red River Rock / No Particular Place To Go / The Wanderer / I Hear You Knocking / Lucille / Great Balls Of Fire)	STATUS QUO
Cotton Eyed Joe	REDNEX
Flava (Crighton & Morris 7" Mix)	PETER ANDRE
Just Help Yourself	TONY FERRINO
Cum On Feel The Noize	SLADE
Blockbuster	SWEET
Hit Me With Your Rhythm Stick	IAN DURY & THE BLOCKHEADS
I'll Be There For You	FRIENDS
Y. M. C. A.	VILLAGE PEOPLE
Boney M Megamix: (Rivers Of Babylon / Sunny / Daddy Cool / Rasputin)	BONEY M
Celebration	KOOL & THE GANG
Boogie Wonderland	EARTH WIND & FIRE
You Make Me Feel (Mighty Real)	SYLVESTER
Contact	EDWIN STARR
Oops Up Side Your Head	GAP BAND
Back To The 60's: (Pretty Woman Intro / Dancing In The Streets / Black Is Black / Bend Me Shape Me / You Really Got Me / All Day & All Of The Night / Hippy Hippy Shake / Pretty Woman / Mony Mony / Doo Wah Diddy / Sherry / Stay / Big Girls Don't Cry / Proud Mary / Pretty Woman Reprice)	TIGHT FIT
ABBA Medley: (Stars On 45 / Voulez Vous / Bang-A-Boomerang / Money, Money Money / Knowing Me, Knowing You / Fernando / The Winner Takes It All / Super Trouper / Stars On 45)	STARS ON 45
Beatles Medley: (Stars On 45 / No Reply / I'll Be Back / Drive My Car / Do You Want To Know A Secret / We Can Work It Out / I Should Have Known Better / Nowhere Man / You're Going To Lose That Girl / Ticket To Ride / The Word / Eleanor Rigby / Every Little Thing / And You Bird Can Sing / Get Back / Eight Days Week / It Won't Be Long / Daytripper / Wait / Stars On 45 / Good Day Sunshine / My Sweet Lord / Here Comes The Sun / Taxman / A Hard Day's Night / Things We Said Today / If I Fell / You Can't Do That / Please Please Me / From Me To You / I Want To Hold Your Hand / Stars On 45)	STARS ON 45
Beatles Medley: (I Want To Hold Your Hand / Hard Days Night / She Loves You)	TAKE THAT
Guaglione	PEREZ PRADO

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What Becomes Of The Broken Hearted	JIMMY RUFFIN
You Are Everything	DIANA ROSS & MARVIN GAYE
You're All I Need To Get By	MARVIN GAYE & TAMMI TERRELL
Endless Love	DIANA ROSS & LIONEL RICHIE
I'm Still Waiting	DIANA ROSS
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Got To Be There	MICHAEL JACKSON
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I Want You Back	JACKSON 5
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I'll Pick A Rose For My Rose	MARV JOHNSON
You Keep Me Hanging On	DIANA ROSS & THE SUPREMES
Love Machine	MIRACLES
Let's Get Serious	JERMAINE JACKSON
War	EDWIN STARR
All Night Long	MARY JANE GIRLS
This Old Heart Of Mine (Is Weak For You)	ISLEY BROTHERS
Stoned Love	THE SUPREMES
I Don't Blame You At All	SMOKEY ROBINSON & THE MIRACLES
I'm Gonna Make You Love Me	DIANA/SUPREMES/TEMPTATIONS
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Being With You	SMOKEY ROBINSON
Still	COMMODORES
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Searching	CHINA BLACK
Baby I Love Your Way	BIG MOUNTAIN
Sweets For My Sweet	CJ LEWIS
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Housecall (Remix)	SHABBA RANKS & MAXI PRIEST
Jamaican In New York	SHINEHEAD
Oh Carolina	SHAGGY
Sweat (A La La La La Long)	INNER CIRCLE
Mr. Loverman	SHABBA RANKS
Hot Hot Hot	ARROW
Shout (It Out)	LOUCHIE LOU & MICHIE ONE
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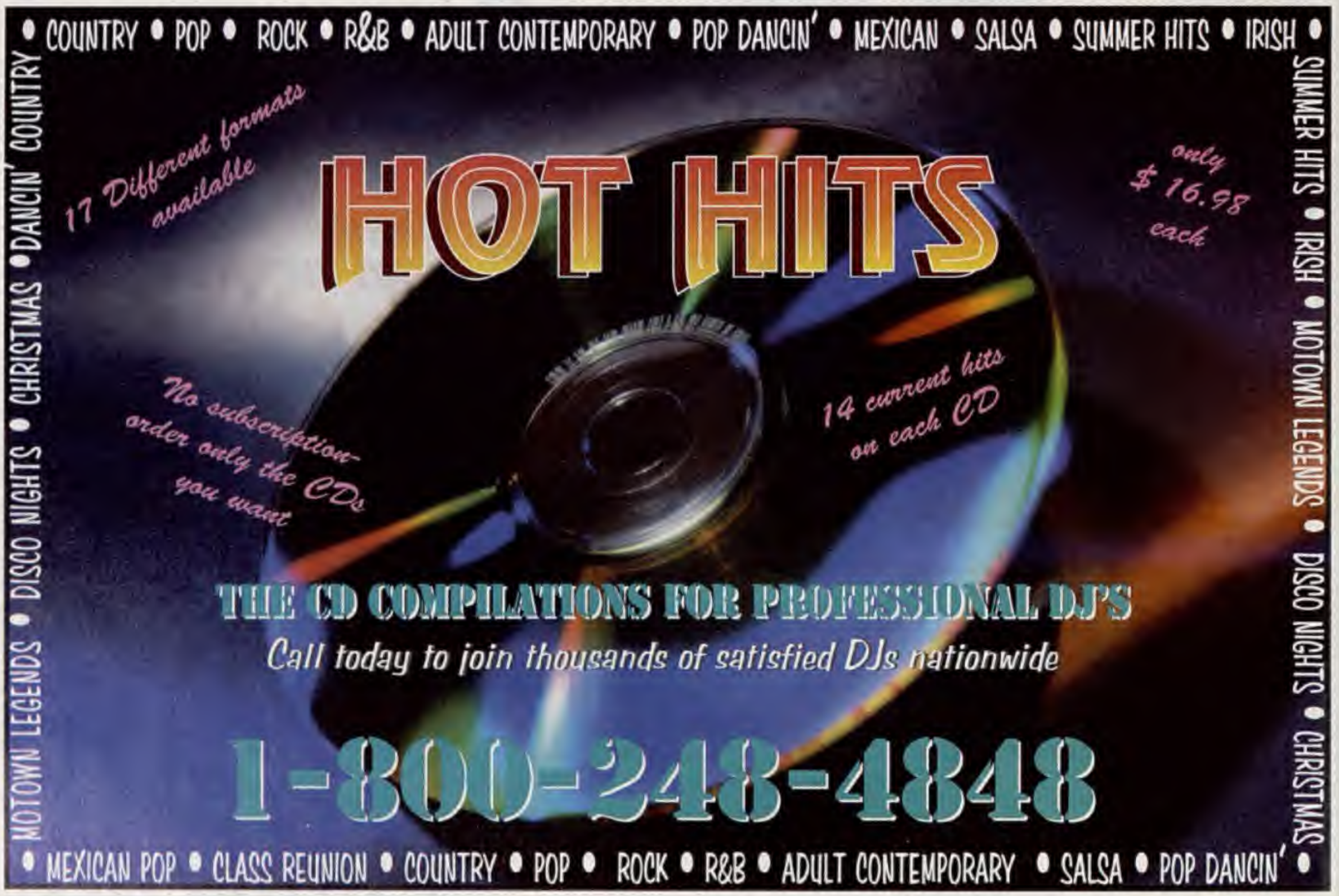
Dark Heart	BOMB THE BASS
Boom Shack-A-Lack	APACHE INDIAN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Good Thing Going (We've Got A Good Thing Going)	SUGAR MINOTT
I Don't Wanna Dance	EDDY GRANT
I Want To Wake Up With You	BORIS GARDINER
Israelites	DESMOND DEKKER
I Can See Clearly Now	JOHNNY NASH
Double Barrell	DAVE & ANSELL COLLINS
To Be Young Gifted And Black	BOB & MARCIA
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She's Not There	THE ZOMBIES
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Sweet Soul Music	ARTHUR CONLEY
Respect	ARETHA FRANKLIN
Soul Man	SAM & DAVE
Papa's Got A Brand New Bag	JAMES BROWN
Barefootin'	ROBERT PARKER
Knock On Wood	EDDIE FLOYD
Rescue Me	FONTELLA BASS
Hard To Handle	OTIS REDDING
Dance To The Music	SLY & FAMILY STONE
Green Onions	BOOKER T. & THE MG'S
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Runaway	DEL SHANNON
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Out Of Time	CHRIS FARLOW
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No Particular Place To Go	CHUCK BERRY
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Pictures Of Matchstick Men	STATUS QUO

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Oye Como Va	TITO PUENTE JR. & THE LATIN RHYTHM
Belo Horizonti	THE HEARTISTS
Cuba	GIBSON BROTHERS
Guaglione	PEREZ "PREZ" PRADO
Tequila	THE CHAMPS
Soul Limbo	BOOKER T & THE MG'S
Hot Hot Hot	ARROW
Funky Nassau	THE BEGINNING OF THE END
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Samba Magic	SUMMER DAZE
Latinos Del Mundo	LATIN THING
Argentina	HEALY & AMOS
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Gitarzan	RAY STEVENS
I Lost On Jeopardy	"WEIRD AL" YANKOVIC
Itsy Bitsy Teenie Weenie Yellow Polkadot Bikini	BRIAN HYLAND
Mister Cluster	LARRY VERNE
The Mississippi Squirrel Revival	RAY STEVENS
Kookie, Kookie (Lend Me Your Comb)	EDD BYRNES & CONNIE STEVENS
Witch Doctor	DAVID SEVILLE
Monster Mash	BOBBY PICKETT
Does Your Chewing Gum Lose Its Flavor (On The Bedpost Over Night)	LONNIE DONEGAN & HIS SKIFFLE GROUP
They're Coming To Take Me Away, Ha-Haa!	NAPOLEON XIV
Cocktails For Two	SPIKE JONES
The Green Door	JIM LOWE
Spiders & Snakes	JIM STAFFORD
Surfin' Bird	THE TRASHMEN
Hello Mudduh, Hello Fadduh (A Letter From Camp)	ALLAN SHERMAN
Get A Job	THE SILHOUETTES
Alley Oop	THE HOLLYWOOD ARGYLES
Auctioneer	LEROY VAN DYKE
Who Put The Bomp (In The Bomp,Bomp,Bomp)	BARRY MANN
On Top Of Spaghetti	TOM GLAZER & THE DO-RE-MI CHILDREN'S CHORUS
Running Bear	JOHNNY PRESTON
Baby Sittin' Boogie	BUZZ CLIFFORD
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Sandman	BLUEBOY
Passion	GAT DECOR
Don't Stop Movin'	LIVIN' JOY
I Believe	HAPPY CLAPPERS
U Sure Do	STRIKE
Two Can Play That Game	BOBBY BROWN
Everybody's Free	ROZALLA
No Limit	2 UNLIMITED
Stayin' Alive	N-TRANCE
Whoomph! (There It Is)	CLOCK
L.S.I. (Love Sex & Intelligence)	SHAMEN
Born Slippy	UNDERWORLD
Open Up	LEFTFIELD & LYDON
Closer Than Close	ROSIE GAINES
You Got The Love	THE SOURCE
Ecuador	SASH!
Ready Or Not	THE COURSE
Show Me Love (Stonebridge Edit)	ROBIN S
The Key, The Secret	URBAN COOKIE COLL.
Keep Warm	JINNY
He's On The Phone (Motiv 8 Mix)	ST. ETIENNE
Killer	ADAMSKY
(I Wanna Give You) Devotion	NOMAD
The Age Of Love	AGE OF LOVE
I Love You...Stop	RED 5
Flylife	BASEMENT JAXX
So In Love With You	DUKE
Just Gets Better	TJR w/ XAVIER
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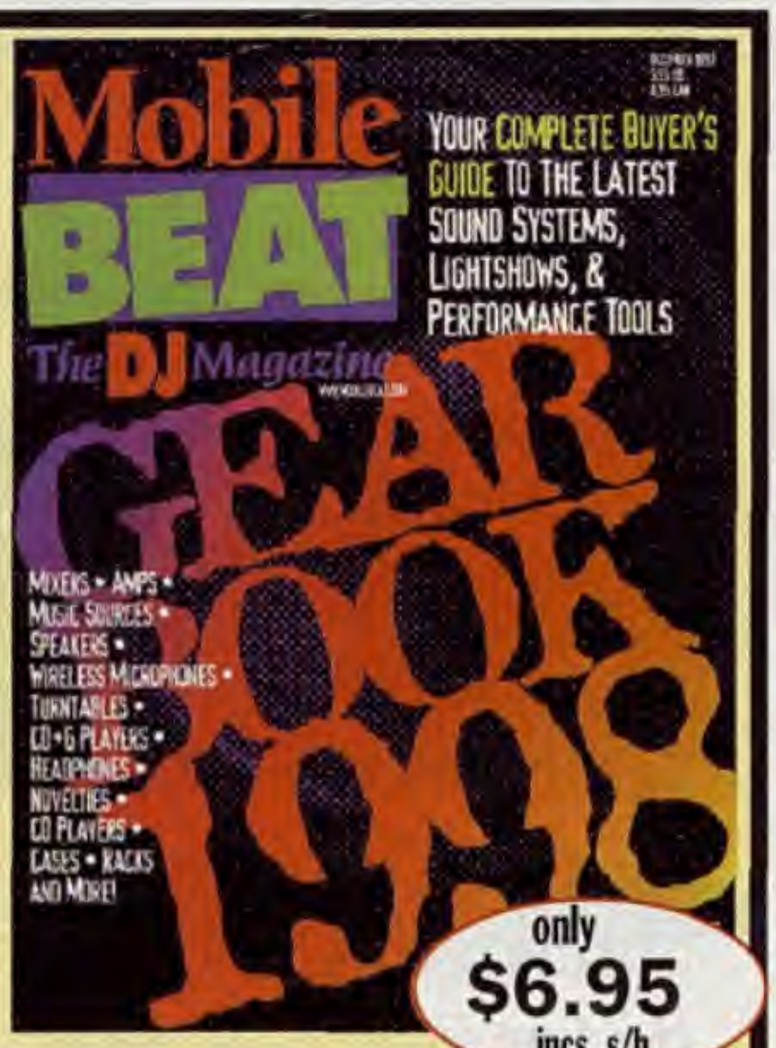
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Boom! Shake The Room	DJ JAZZY JEFF & FRESH PRINCE
Come Baby Come	K7
All About Us	PETER ANDRE
Remember Me	THE BLUEBOY
Can I Kick It?	TRIBE CALLED QUEST
The Magic Number	DE LA SOUL
She's Got That Vibe	R KELLY
Everybody (Backstreet's Back)	BACKSTREET BOYS
Oh Carolina	SHAGGY
Too Hot	COOLIO
We Come To The Party	N-TYCE
Love To Love	DAMAGE
Something About You	NEW EDITION
My Fathers Son	CONNER REEVES
Underwater Love	SMOKE CITY

The No.1 LINE DANCING ALBUM

Haunted Heart	SAMMY KERSHAW
One Way Ticket	LEANN RIMES
I'm Still Falling	BARRY UPTON & WILD AT HEART
455 Rocket	KATHY MATTEA
Crash Bam Boom	T. CANE HONEY
It Came From The South	AL ANDERSON
Girls With Guitars	WYNONNA
That Was Then	BOB WOODRUFF

"NO.1 LINE DANCING ALBUM"

Here's yet another kicking' country compilation. The is a new two-CD compilation that features some club versions, BPMs and dance instructions. In its first two weeks it's already a bestseller. Tracks are:

Cannibals	MARK KNOPFLER
Still Cruisin'	THE BEACH BOYS
Black Velvet	ALLANAH MYLES
Wild Wild West (Edit)	THE ESCAPE CLUB
Any Way The Wind Blows	BROTHER PHELPS
Electric Boogie	MARCIA GRIFFITHS
Dance	TWISTER ALLEY
Achy Breaky Heart	BILLY RAY CYRUS
One Step Beyond	DESERT ROSE BAND
Dancin', Shaggin' On The Boulevard	ALABAMA
Be My Baby Tonight	JOHN MICHAEL MONTGOMERY
Scott & Frans Paso Doble From Strictly Ballroom	DAVID HIRSCHFELDER & THE BOGO POGO ORCH.
Hot Hot Hot (Caribbean Cowboy Mix)	ARROW
I Like It, I Love It (Club Mix)	TIM McGRAW
Singing The Blues	KENTUCKY HEADHUNTERS
Cotton Eyed Joe	REDNEX
Why Me?	DELBERT McCLINTON
Bigger Fish To Fry (Dance Mix)	BOY HOWDY
Jose Cuervo (Tequila Mix)	KIMBER CLAYTON
High Test Love	SCOOTER LEE
I'm A Cowboy (Dance Mix)	SMOKIN' ARMADILLOS
Hillbilly Rock Hillbilly Roll	THE WOOLPACKERS
Macarena (Club Mix)	GROOVE GRASS BOYZ
Sea Of Cowboy Hats	CHELY WRIGHT
Queen Of Memphis	CONFEDERATE RAILROAD
Smokey Places	RONNIE McDOWELL
Better Things To Do	TERRI CLARK
Fever (Dance Mix)	JEFF MOORE

"BIG BAND CRAZY: THE SWINGING PARTY ALBUM"

The remix companies have covered most of the top dance tracks for the club scene and now there's a label that promises to create a new sound out of big band swing. This is the first full-length compilation release featuring four medleys that can be played continuously or tracked to each song. Excellently remixed and produced by Electric Swing, these big band classic hits are true to the originals. They combine clean original master recordings with drum beats and bass lines that compliment this sound and give it a fresh new contagious dance beat.

Blue Plate Special:
We'll Git It
Trumpet Blues
Deep River
Red Hot Medley:

Music Maestro strikes gold with new compilation

Music Maestro, creator of the innovative Club Packs, introduces Karaoke Gold, a limited edition compilation of Club Pack '98. It includes the Country Pack, Oldies and Standard Packs. It's boxed in a leatherette binder with an alphabetical song book included. With a total of 500 tracks included, this is one of the most complete core library choices any KJ or karaoke enthusiast could want. If you're still missing the song you need, just search through the complete Music Maestro library and you are likely to find it there. For more information, contact Music Maestro at (310) 314-3888.

Downhill Special
King Porter Stomp
Sing Sing Sing
Jumpin' At The Woodside
Bugle Call Rag
High Wire Mix:
Crown Royal
Flying Home
Apple Honey
Air Mail Special
Boogie Woogie Medley:
Boogie Woogie
Hamp's Boogie Woogie
Opus 1

"CHRISTY LANE'S COMPLETE PARTY DANCE MUSIC"

She's a big hit every year at the Mobile Beat DJ Show & Conference in Las Vegas and she is one of the country's top names in dance instruction. Now Christy Lane has joined forces with the country's leading producer of music for DJs, Bobby Morganstein. Together, they've created a collection loaded with mostly new renditions of all-time classic party dances. An instructional video is available. Tracks are:

Electric Slide
Born To Hand Jive (Hand Jive)
Sing Sing Sing (Swing)
Bunny Hop
Stroll
Twist
The Hustle
YMCA
80's Dance Medley
Macarena
C'mon'N Ride It (The Train)
Wild Wild West (Barn Dance Mixer)
Cotton Eyed Joe
Hot, Hot, Hot (Conga)
Limbo Rock (Limbo)
Chicken Dance
Hokey Pokey
Hands Up
Party Dance Beats
Party Closing Afternoon
Party Closing Evening

"SOUNDS OF THE SEASONS"

is a new holiday release sure to be a top seller. It features long sought after hits and classics.

Santa Claus Is Coming To Town	BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN
Teddy's Song	JOHN MELLENCAMP
Ho, Ho, Ho, Who'd Be A Turkey For Christmas	ELTON JOHN
Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas	SHAWN COLVIN
Blue Christmas	WILLIE NELSON
O Holy Night	PATTI LaBELLE
Snowfall	TONY BENNETT
Celebrate Me Home	KENNY LOGGINS
Do You Hear What I Hear	VINCE GILL
Winter Wonderland	ARETHA FRANKLIN
I'll Be Home For Christmas	REBA McENTIRE
Merry Christmas Baby	B.B. KING

Many CDs featured in "Music News" are imports or independent labels not widely distributed. For information on where you can buy these titles or a free catalog of new releases, call AVC Sebastian at (201) 731-5290.

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CMS sends Indiana clubs back in time

The Vogue, one of Indianapolis' top nightspots, recently implemented two exciting "retro" promotions that have been an immediate hit. The first promotion, on Wednesday nights, The Vogue presents "Retro Rewind," with music and attitude exclusively from the '70s. On Friday nights, the club presents the second promotion, "'80s Enough," with music and video. The club packs 'em in with over 1,300 people on both nights.

"We've really hit a home run with these promotions," said Steve Ross, co-owner of The Vogue. Ross' partner is Dennis Burris. "Our goal was to broaden our appeal and to not rely exclusively on the live entertainment part of our business," added Ross.

The Vogue, the city's premiere concert venue for top local bands and national recording artists, now features DJs as well as live entertainment.

"On Wednesdays, our staff really gets into the '70s clothes and our dance troop performs dynamics on our stage to '70s songs," says Ross. "On Fridays, we utilize our video presentation to recreate that '80s dance club feeling. We show lots of '80s inspired movies, music videos and comedy clips.

"We called upon CMS in Houston to help us format the music on both of these nights and it's been working great," says Ross.

"It was important to ensure we didn't duplicate songs, which would have been easy to do with a retro theme promotion," says Wyatt Magnum, president of CMS. "We've tried to create a different environment on both of these nights and we've extremely pleased with the results."

"We didn't want to take any chances with our investment by playing the wrong music and CMS has been a tremendous help," added Burris.

These promotions have been so successful that they have both been implemented at their Bloomington, Ind. location called Mars.

In a time warp at The Vogue: (l-r) Wyatt Magnum of CMS with The Vogue co-owner, Steve Ross.

CMS, located in Houston, Texas, is a national nightclub consulting service providing music formatting and DJ training. For information on CMS services and opportunities call (800) 266-4700.

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HOLIDAY TRIVIA

It's holiday party time again, when the crowds can swing from outrageous and wild to sleepy and mild. The toughest point of any holiday bash is that awkward transition between the bosses' ho-hum speech to the dance music. One of the better ways to smooth out that segue and get the whole crowd involved in your show is with a trivia contest. You can take the simple approach and toss out a brain teaser between songs, or organize teams and turn it into a real production.

Here's a list of 20 holiday questions that should (slightly) challenge any crowd. Expand beyond the list with some of your own questions, or try your own version of "Name That Tune" using old TV show and commercial themes. Seldom will you find a crowd that doesn't enjoy a dose of trivia.

For an added marketing twist, print up the questions (with or without the answers) on your letterhead and pass them out as give-aways.

TOP 20 HOLIDAY TRIVIA QUESTIONS

1. Who invented the art of giving Christmas presents?
2. Who sang "Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer"?
3. How many eggs are in eight quarts of eggnog?
4. How did red and green become the traditional colors of Christmas?
5. For what movie could you say that Santa won an Academy Award?
6. What is the average temperature of The North Pole?
7. Where was I when "I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus"?
8. "The Gift of the Magi" was written by whom?
9. Name Santa's reindeer.
10. Boris Karloff was the star of what TV Christmas favorite?
11. Christmas, Florida is closest to what major city?
12. What famous Christmas story begins with the line, "One dollar and eighty-seven cents"?
13. Name the most commercially successful Christmas film.
14. Name three actors who played Scrooge in the movies.
15. Name Bill Murray's Christmas classic.
16. "God bless us, every one!" is the end of what Christmas epic?
17. True or False: In South American countries, setting off fireworks is a popular way of celebrating Christmas.
18. The "Chipmunks Christmas Song" came out in what year?
19. True or False: Christmas is not celebrated in the Philippines.
20. Name six of the all-time top 10 Christmas songs.

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ANSWERS

1. The Three Wise Men
2. Elmo and Patsy
3. A dozen
4. In early times, red apples decorated green trees
5. "Miracle on 34th Street" Ed Gwynn played Santa and won an Academy Award
6. -21° F
7. On the stairs
8. O'Henry
9. Rudolph, Dasher, Comet, Dancer, Cupid, Prancer, Vixen, Blitzen, and Donner
10. "How the Grinch Stole Christmas"
11. Orlando
12. "The Gift of the Magi"
13. "Home Alone"
14. Alastair Sim, Reginald Owen, George C. Scott, Albert Finney, Michael Cain, or Sir Seymore Hicks
15. "Scrooged"
16. "A Christmas Carol" (said by Tiny Tim)
17. True
18. 1958
19. False
20. *White Christmas* - Bing Crosby, *Silent Night* - Bing Crosby, *Rudolph* - Gene Autry, *Chipmunk Song* - Chipmunks, *I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus* - Jimmy Boyd, *Little Drummer Boy* - H. Simone, *Do They Know It's Christmas* - Band Aid, *I'll Be Home For Christmas* - Bing Crosby, *Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer* - Elmo & Patsy, *Jingle Bell Rock* - Bobby Helms

Christmas trivia provided by David R. Varga, owner of disc jockey companies in New York and Florida. Please e-mail David with your own trivia at djbobbby@aol.com

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Dance Music: Feel It. Work It. Live It!

BY ROBERT TAYLOR

The K-Show

With Simply Live, you can outperform live band entertainment

If you're still thinking of karaoke in terms of black and white, it's time to add some color! Karaoke has developed very wide appeal along with many new possibilities. Many DJs have discovered that karaoke can be a very effective way to get more people involved with the show. This puts the emphasis on audience interaction, while treating karaoke as a means to that end. For example, karaoke can be a terrific warm up for corporate holiday parties and other events where the guests need to ease into the dance portion of your show. For some shows, particularly around the holidays, straight karaoke, featuring a rapid fire revue of one singer after another, works extremely well. And it should; it's the format that is the foundation of karaoke.

But there's more. Some DJs have begun to take karaoke to the next level and they're doing so in bold and beautiful colors. I'm talking about using karaoke as the main focus in a "big production."

In my business we call it "Simply Live" and it features the usual array of live singers accompanied by the karaoke tracks, interspersed with custom tracks and variety acts.

BE THE SHOW

Simply Live provides the entertainment of a live performance without live instrumentation. It's the DJ/musical director's answer to live music. It takes as few as four or six vocalists/performers and a variety of bits and skits that engage the audience. These bits can run from simply having your vocalists/performers sing backup for an audience member, to outrageous group impersonations using props and wigs. The creative side of this is limited only by your imagination. Tip: The best way to learn the latest audience interactive tricks is to attend the *Mobile Beat Show* in Vegas!

Your part in this, as musical director, is much like programming music at a regular DJ gig. The difference is that you draw from a list of appropriate bits and music that fit the format. Simply Live delivers a seamless supply of recorded originals, along with live performances that are sometimes comical, and always entertaining.

Unlike a band, which is limited to their repertoire, your karaoke show is only limited to your music library. Best of all, as the DJ/musical director, you do not have to rely on the existing audience talent pool. This is not a format of one audience member singing after the next. Although karaoke interaction may be an element of audience participation, this does not rely solely on the audience for entertainment.

Simply Live brings together the best qualities of a live band and DJ package, without limitations. For example, there are no breaks, which eliminates the roller coaster effect. And because you supply the singers

Simply Live brings together the best qualities of a live band and DJ package, without limitations. For example, there are no breaks, which eliminates the roller coaster effect. And because you supply the singers who are central to the show, there's a steady stream of quality vocals, compared to typical karaoke. No more odd moments waiting for folks to get to the stage.

who are central to the show, there's a steady stream of quality vocals, compared to typical karaoke. No more odd moments waiting for folks to get to the stage. The audience enjoys watching as much as dancing because it's more of a show than watching a DJ behind the booth cueing and mixing CDs. And instead of staring at a TV screen, your audience is treated to some real entertainment.

THE RIGHT MIX

Speaking of mixing, it is almost the same as a regular DJ show, musically moving from one performance to the next. Beat mixing from track to track is now possible because you control the musical content.

Where do you find the singers to lead your show? I suggest you start with your current following of karaoke fans. Next, run an ad in a publication that's read by local singers and musicians. You are looking for people who can sing and like to perform in front of people. You'll need one person who can act as the leader/host and as few as three others to sing backup or do solos during the show. What you pay them will depend on the price of your shows, and your ability to negotiate. In most cases, your little group of performers will see this as a chance to put extra cash in their pockets while having a lot of fun. What you can charge for such a show will vary upon numerous factors but, on average, you'll be able to charge on par with that of a band of comparable size.

With the sophistication of today's karaoke equipment combined with good sound processing, your show can sound just as good as or better, than many live shows with full instrumental back up. Your show can offer all the fun and personality of live performance with professionally produced tracks. Simply stated, it's the best of both worlds!

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CLUB VIEW

FAQs

Taking on frequently asked questions by Club DJs.

BY DAVE KREINER

As a nightclub consultant and music supplier, I'm in touch with DJs and nightclub operators on a day-to-day basis. I get asked a lot of questions about every DJ-related topic possible, from how to handle requests to club owner/manager relations, to the pay scale in clubs. I also get calls for advice on equipment, programming, promoters, lighting, tipping, club operations, live bands... you name it. Here are a few of the more popular questions from recent weeks.

Q. How can I play requests without sacrificing the integrity of my nightly programming?
A. This is a tough one because there are so many different pressures and variables facing a DJ on a nightly basis. The easy way out is to say you don't have the song. If only it was that simple. First, you have to please the owner who has asked you to play a certain style of music, which becomes the signature sound of his club on that night. Second, there are the DJ's instincts that tell him to read the crowd, play the right songs to motivate them and increase bar sales. Then you get Joe Six-pack who asks you to play a ballad at midnight because, "If you play a slow one, I'll get lucky Dude!"

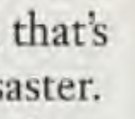
One way out of this dilemma is to hang a clipboard full of paper by your DJ booth for customers to write down their requests. At the very top print in very large letters "Requests will be played ASAP (As Soon As Programmable)." Having the list does two things: It gives the customer instant recognition, and it gives the DJ a break from 20-30 interruptions. A request sheet also takes away the chance of personal conflict. Telling a customer that the song they requested is not part of the nightly format opens a debate with a person who may be drunk and who knows nothing about music programming. Again, saying you don't have it will always help. One more thing the request sheet does is keep you and your programming staff in touch with your customers' needs and trends. If you get a lot of requests for a certain song, and it fits your club's format, it's time to go buy it!

Q. My club owner won't buy a pitchable dual CD player. We are using one home CD player and a portable player that skips, any suggestions?

A. With any business, any purchase an owner considers making depends on price and ROI (return on investment). Buying an ice machine makes sense, but convincing the owner that a $900 or more CD player will make him money may be tough. It is difficult to gauge if sales will increase enough to make this purchase worthwhile. You have to acquaint him with the new technology and explain to him that improving and updating equipment will allow you to be more creative and put on a better show. This increase in your productivity will increase energy and crowd response which will also increase bar sales. Educate him by taking him to a music store and showing him the features of a dual CD player. A great way to hook the owner is to let him spin a few songs early in the evening. This hands-on approach, and the level of trust he has with you, should net you the purchase.

Q. My club owner wants to bring in live bands on weekends and not use a DJ. What should I do?
A. Live bands are a great departure from the DJ-only format. The visual and entertainment value is very powerful. However, when the band takes a break, all the energy the band just built is gone. For a small club, that's OK. For medium to large clubs, that could spell disaster. The owner can charge a higher cover charge to pay the band, and should definitely keep a DJ on staff to play between the band sets. To keep it fresh, the DJ shouldn't play any songs the band plays, and should try to play some of the musical styles the band didn't play. Most bands have a limited song list, where a DJ has thousands of songs that he or she can play to offset the band's shortcomings. Plus, if the band sucks, the $800 the owner spent on them could have been used to buy that dual CD player!

If you have a question, or a comment to add to my responses, get in touch with me. Your questions and comments will be addressed in future articles. Please contact me at scmsrecord@aol.com. Don't forget to include your name, address, phone number and club name.



Dave Kreiner is the owner of "The Source DJ Music Supply" and Southern California Music. They are a music supplier and mail order company servicing 12" singles, CDs, and remixes for Mobile DJs and Nightclub DJs. To get a FREE flyer call (800) 775-3472 or check out their Web page at www.thesourceformusic.com

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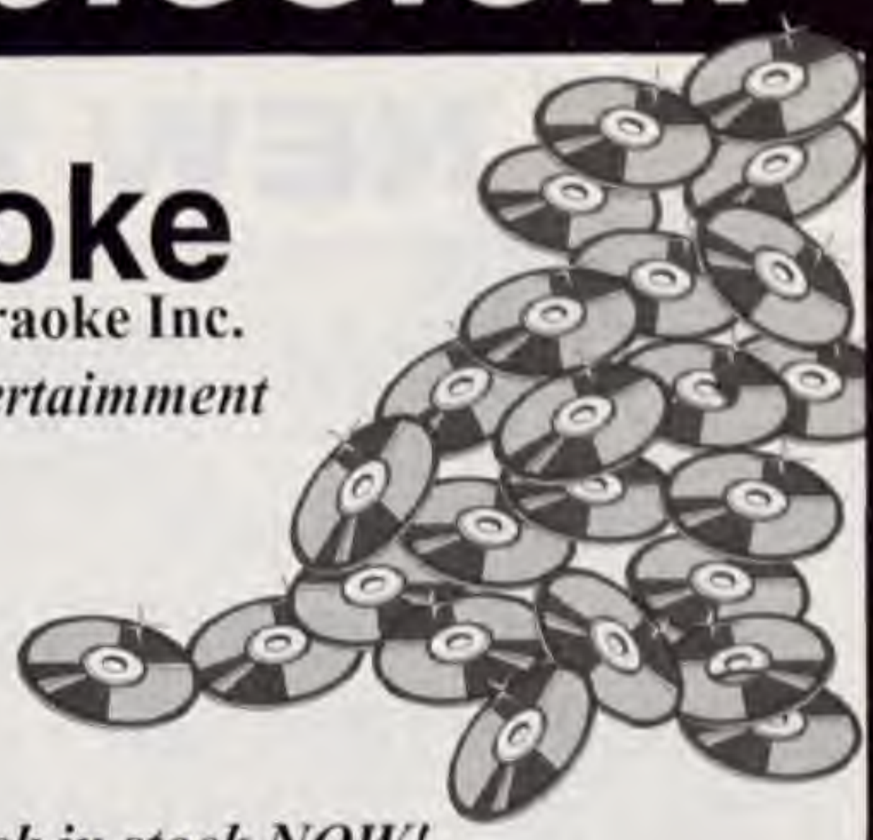

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TECH TALK from page 44

but be careful not to lose high end definition (crispness) in the process.

• How about that old 45 from the '50s? This will take a little more work. First we have to adjust the 16k control to remove the high frequency garbage. We can also reduce the 8k control a bit to eliminate some of the snaps, crackles and pops. A nice boost around 6k should bring out the high end a bit more. Guitars will probably be recorded very low, so bringing down the 2.5k and 4k controls is in order. A boost around 250Hz will add a bit of fullness, and finally raise the 60Hz control to enhance the low end. This may seem like a lot of work for one record, but if you are recording it to tape, minidisc or CD, you'll want it to sound the best it can.

• Many things can cause feedback, but usually it results from where the microphone is placed in relation to the speakers. Therefore, before you try any electronic remedies, move the mic. If that doesn't work, use your EQ to locate the offending frequencies and reduce them. Most mics will tend to feedback at one or two particular frequencies, in the mid to high ranges. Once you have established which frequencies seem to feedback with certain mics, write them down and keep them with the mic to eliminate the problem next time.

DO'S AND DON'TS

As I said before: Don't use an EQ as a bass/treble amplifier. It may sound nice when you make your 12-inch woofer sound like an 18-inch, but it won't be long before that woofer breakdances across the dancefloor and ends up sizzled.

So how do you prevent this? Go for the gain control; it should be next to the first or last control for the frequency bands. Raise and lower this control while depressing and releasing the EQ bypass button. Keep pressing the button in and out while adjusting the gain control. Try to find the spot where there is no difference in the equalized sound's volume and that of the unequalized sound. If the equalized sound is too loud, lower the gain. If it is too soft, raise the gain.

Another thing I see often, which is not good EQ etiquette, is the use of two EQs. If you are using an outboard (not in the mixer) 15-band EQ, and you have an equalizer in your mixer, turn the mixer EQ off. Using two EQs simultaneously can ruin your amp and/or speakers. However, there is a safe way to use two EQs. Since you cannot cause any damage by cutting a signal, you may use one EQ normally and the other only to cut certain frequencies. Also, it isn't advisable to use sonic maximizers or sound enhancement units with equalizers. Most of these units are actually fancy EQs and should only be used alone.

With all that in mind, you can see how useful an EQ can be in your DJ, KJ, or Club rig. If you have any further questions on this or any other topics I have talked about in previous issues, call me at Abracadabra Lights and Sounds (516) 667-2300.

NUMARK DM 1635 from page 58

degree of difference between the beats of the sources; red being "train wreck," yellow is "almost there," and green is "go for the mix."

Below the source selector LEDS, there are two vertical rows of three large black buttons. The first pair selects the source. The second pair sets the synch lock position. The third sets the beat assist process into motion.

According to the manual, the Beatkeeper is foolproof as long as the beat is distinctive. Track any beat up to 199 with a special setting, or automatically if your music is between 80-150 BPM.

Using the Beatkeeper is a simple process using synching or beat assisting. Synching involves watching the green LED change to a red as the unit scans and updates the BPM display every five seconds. It then becomes aligned to the beat of the music. Once this is accomplished, you press the appropriate synch lock button. Pressing this button stops the scanning process and locks the Beatkeeper into the correct BPM 90 percent of the time.

Beat assisting, on the other hand, is a more interactive approach to determining the correct BPMs and setting up for the perfect mix. For example, if the music doesn't have a steady, well-defined beat, or you need a quick setup for your next mix, then tapping the Beat Assist buttons aligns the Beatkeeper to the music in two to eight beats.

Mixing two channels together now involves a three-step process: synching or beat assisting, tempo, and beat alignment. Once you set up the two channels you want to mix, it's a simple matter of matching the green LEDS in both the tempo and beat offset bar graphs. You may have to adjust your pitch bend button or the pitch slider to help this process along. Now you can not only hear your perfect mix, you can see when it's ready.

For the experienced DJ, the Beatkeeper provides another way to check beats or assist in a pinch. For the novice or less experienced DJ, it's really a great tool because of its visual capabilities.

THE VERDICT?

As for the fit and finish of the product, Numark's DM1635 is clean and well organized. The legends are legible even in dim lighting. The LEDS are bright and easy to read. All the controls operate smoothly and the assembly appears first rate. Basically, a good looking and sounding mixer.

On the job, the DM1635's sliders seemed loose and not as "silky" as I would like, but certainly acceptable. The master slider has a more determined dampening, I suspect to prohibit it from being accidentally bumped into the red. Given the choice, I'd like all the source sliders to match the dampening of the master; which I believe would give this board a better overall feel. Then again, when you take into account the price and the segment of the market this mixer is designed for, it's hard to say it's anything less than a very good board, with some cool features and overall good sound.

For more information, contact Numark Industries, 111 Dupont Drive, Providence, RI 02907. Tel: (401) 946-4700 • Fax: (401) 946-5350.

DMA Top 50 Dance Chart

Courtesy of Dance Music Authority
708-614-8417

Artist	Title	Label	BPM
1. ULTRA NATE	Free	Strictly Rhythm	125
2. LISA STANSFIELD	Never Gonna Give You Up	Arista	129
3. DEBORAH COX	Things Just Ain't The Same (Dance Mix)	Arista	127
4. DIANA KING	Say A Little Prayer	Work	127
5. OLIVE	You're Not Alone	RCA	128/138
6. BRAINBUG	Nightmare	Groovilicious	127
7. FAITHLESS	Salva Mea (Remix)	Arista	125
8. TONI BRAXTON	I Don't Want To	LaFace	126
9. DAFT PUNK	Around The World	Virgin	121
10. AQUA	Barbie Girl	MCA	130
11. BORIS DLUGOSCH	Hold Your Head Up High (Remix)	Real Time	125
12. DOLLY PARTON	Peace Train	Flip It	126
13. PATTI LABELLE	When You Talk About Love	MCA	123
14. TODD TERRY	Something Goin' On	Logic	125
15. MARIAH CAREY	Honey (Remix)	Columbia	128
16. KEVIN AVIANCE	Din Da Da	Wave	127
17. FUNKY GREEN DOGS	The Way (Remix)	Twisted	125
18. LE CLICK	Call Me	Logic	128
19. ERASURE	Don't Say Your Love Is Killing Me	Maverick	128
20. ALEXIA	Number One	Popular	132
21. ONDINA	Summer Of Love	Interhit	130/142
22. KLUBHEADS	Discohopping	Blue	134
23. BLUE BOY	Remember Me	OM	125
24. HYPER GO GO & ADEVA	Do Watcha Do	Vynyl 4	127
25. SASH	Ecuador	Ultra Europe	132
26. LE CLICK	Don't Go	Logic/RCA	130
27. BACKSTREET BOYS	Quit Playing Games (Remix)	Jive	124
28. DEPECHE MODE	It's No Good	Reprise	120
29. DUKE	So In Love With You	4 Play	130
30. TINA TURNER	On Silent Wings	Virgin	126
31. KELLEE	This Man	Moonshine	126
32. ROBIN S	It Must Be Love (Remix)	Big Beat	125
33. FRANCE JOLI	Breakaway	Popular	129
34. MADONNA	Buenos Aires (Remix)	Warner Bros.	128
35. BRAND NEW HEAVIES	You Are The Universe	ffrr	124
36. JAMIROQUAI	Alright	Work	123
37. FULL INTENTION	Shake Your Body	Sugar Daddy	126
38. SNEAKER PIMPS	Spin Spin Sugar (Remix)	Virgin Underground	129
39. OUTHERE BROTHERS	LaDe Da De Da De (I Like To Party)	Aureus	132
40. FIRST CHOICE	The Player	Minimal	123
41. 3RD PARTY	My Love Is Alive	DV8	128
42. NAYOBE	Let's Party Tonight	Sony Latin	129
43. ANN NESBY	Hold On (Remix)	Perspective / A&M	123
44. ME AND MY	Dub-I-Dub	Grand Slam	136
45. SHAMPALE CARTIER	I'm Talking To You	SFP	127
46. PINAY	Is It Real	Classified	125
47. PEOPLE UNDERGROUND	Music Is Pumpin	Nervous	126
48. PHUNKY PHANTOM	Get Up Stand Up	Groovilicious	136
49. RU PAUL	Celebrate	Rhino	128
50. NEWTON	We're All Alone	Dominion/UK	132

AD INDEX

Abracadabra	25
American DJ	3, BC
American Mobile Sound	97
Ashly Audio	55
Audio Climax	98
Azden	34
Bag End	19
Bobby Morganstein Productions	116-117
Breakthrough Marketing	61
BST	7
Carlson Craft	30
Chartbuster	99
Chauvet	63
Colorado Sound N' Light	89
Core Store	57
Crest Audio	31
CT DJ Supply	77
Customware	90
Denon	17
DMA Magazine	107
Electronic Bargains	65
ETI	IBC
Farralane	68
Gem Sound	35
Gemini	IFC, 47
Grundorf	42
H & F	74
Hot Hits	94
Island Cases	62
J&P Products	100
KAM	59
Karaoke Etc.	103
Karaoke Warehouse	122
Lightcraft	90
MBT International	83
MidAmerica	101
Mobile Beat DJ Show	12-18
Mobile Beat Top 200 CDs	106
MTX	9
Music Factory	85
Music Industries	57
Music Maestro	91
Music Yellow Pages	57
NAME	73
Needle Doctor	72
Numark	4-5
Odyssey	71
Omnisistem	67
Pinto Novelty	79
Pioneer	26-27
Planet DJ	81
Planet Karaoke	109
Pro Sing	105
ProSound & Stage	78
PSWCDT Music Guide	21
QSC	23
RI Novelty	97
Severe Sound	49
Sherman Specialty	72
Shure Brothers	39
Sonic	51
Sound Choice	95
Sound Ideas	69
Spinnin' 2000	42
Stanton	43
Starr Karaoke	115
TopTone	41
Tracoman/Vestax	15
Univenture	109
Upstairs Records	53
VocoPro	87
Western Starlite	93
X-Mix	102

BY RANDALL O'MALLY
SASKATOON, SASKATCHEWAN,
CANADA

For as long as I have been doing mobile gigs, I have always looked forward to the end of summer and the beginning of the holiday season. Weddings are fine, but by the end of September, I've had enough.

For me, the holiday season begins with a particular Halloween party. It's always the same group of about 50 people who each kick in some cash for one big annual bash. It's always held at the same place, an old roadhouse café just out of town. I always deal with the same contact who trusts me totally to program the music. They like lots of fog and effects and appreciate the sound of a full system. It's a "perfect" gig, if there is one... at least until this past year.

Assuming that the party would be held the Saturday before Halloween, as in the past, I had kept that date open. I got the call as expected. However, I was told that my former contact was no longer with the group and that I would be dealing with a guy named Gary. I sent out the appropriate contract, which was returned almost immediately with a money order for the full amount up front (I had only asked for $50 deposit).

When I called back to confirm receipt of the contract, I asked the usual set of questions about lighting, requests, etc. In years past, I had always treated this group to a dazzling light show with all sorts of effects and fog, so I was rather surprised when the client made it very clear that there were to be no lights of any kind. When I asked about music, he said the music would be furnished to me when I got there.

While I found these requests rather weird, very little really shocks me anymore. That was until I got a call from Laura, the lady who I had worked for in the past. She asked if I had been called to the party. I told her I had. She suggested I try to get out of doing the booking, but wouldn't say why. I figured that maybe she had had a falling out with her "gang" and this was just sour grapes. Still, I was haunted by her phone call.

When the night arrived, I showed up at the address on the contract, which was the same location as in the past. To my surprise, the parking lot was totally dark. There was a sign on the front that read "closed-keep out" and all the doors and windows were boarded up. Just as I was about to return to my van and call the client on my cellular, two figures in dark shrouds came running out from the building toward me. I was about to hit the gas and burn rubber but one of the dudes was blocking my path. The other pounded on the driver's side window and yelled, "Are you the DJ?" I nodded, with much trepidation. "Come around back" the one dark figure replied, "and keep your lights off."

The two met me at the back of the building and started to help me load in my gear. Without the light show or music, there were only a couple cases and the speakers. Once inside, it was obvious this place had been vacant for most of the year. The AC power was still live, so aside from finding it rather weird, I didn't give it a second thought. Still, I was instructed to use only a flashlight.

As I set up my system, I could hear voices murmuring from all corners of the pitch black room. There had been no other vehicles outside so I assumed I was one of the first to arrive. At the predetermined start time, Gary came over with a short stack of CDs and instructed me to play them in order, top to bottom, all the way through. "I guess I can do that, even in the dark," I thought. As I slipped the first disc into my player, I noticed by the greenish tint on the backside that it was a homemade recording. I didn't recognize the music. Gary came back and told me to turn the music down. It was barely audible when he said, "Okay, that's perfect."

Suddenly the entire room was filled with tiny little yellow lights. The lights began moving all over. As best as I could tell, everyone in the room was wearing several of those little finger flashlights. No one was making a sound, they were just swirling around oddly. Believe it or not, this was all the people did for the next three hours. At the end of the night, Gary stepped forward and said a few words to the crowd in some language I had never heard before. He then threw something into the air. I could feel tiny droplets hit on my hands and face; it felt like warm water.

After his speech, my two helpers returned to assist me in getting out of the place. As I pulled out of the driveway, I noticed a police car sitting at the entrance to the parking lot. As I passed the car I noticed the officer inside was someone I had gone to school with. I stopped and he asked me what I was doing at the old roadhouse. When I told him about the odd events of the night, he decided the whole thing sounded fishy and decided to take a look around. He followed me around to the back entrance, which I had just left moments ago. It was locked and boarded, no sign of anyone around. When he started to ask questions, he could see I was just as confused as he was. After about an hour, he sent me home and said if I ever hear from this guy Gary again to give him a call. When I got home, another memory of the event came back. As I took off my hat and coat, I discovered I was covered with little red spots that looked like... blood?

Whether or not it was, I didn't really want to know. I just wanted to wash it off as soon as I could. One thing I did know was... it was the last Halloween party I planned to do for a long, long time.

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